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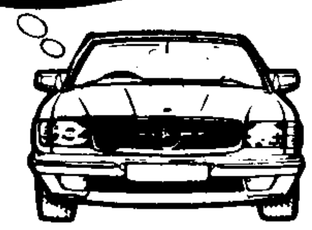

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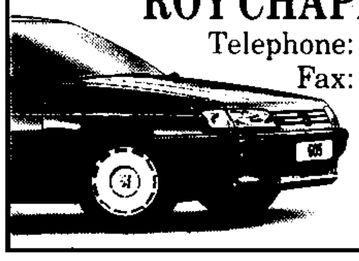

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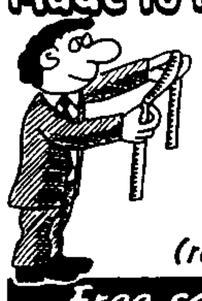

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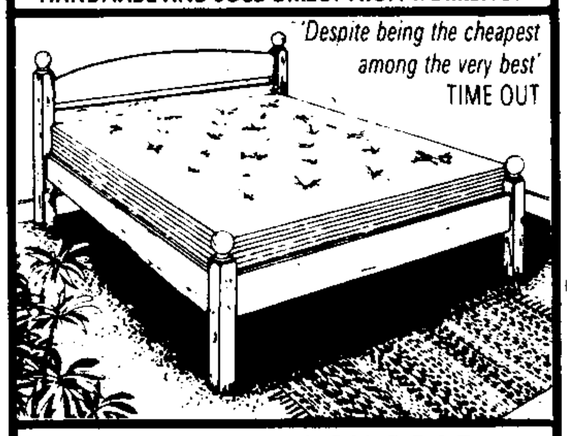

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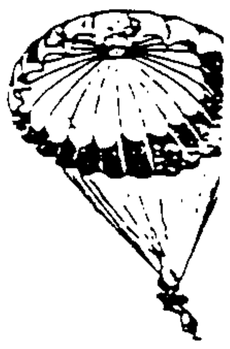

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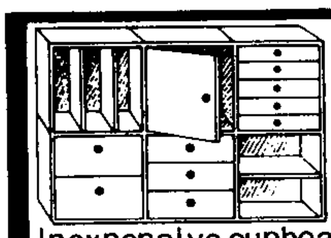

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Gnome

I FAIL to understand all the fuss about the state of the British Economy. The press and the media continue to harp on about the low value of the pound, the high interest rates, the record unemployment figures, the empty order books, and the gloom in the retail trade.

Why do they have to be so negative? And why do they have to blame the government for this bleak picture which they themselves have painted?

Mr Major and Mr Lamont must not be made the scapegoats for this unwarranted outburst from the moaning minnies and the whingeing willies of the Fourth Estate.

These prophets of doom are deliberately presenting the gloomy side of the British Economy, but there is another more positive side.

Some companies are doing extremely well, making very large profits and creating jobs for hundreds of young men in striped shirts.

For example, my own firm, the Gnome of Zurich International Bank, made a profit of £200 billion last week, most of it in about twenty minutes one afternoon.

These are the sort of figures that should be mentioned when the subjects of productivity and wealth creation arise.

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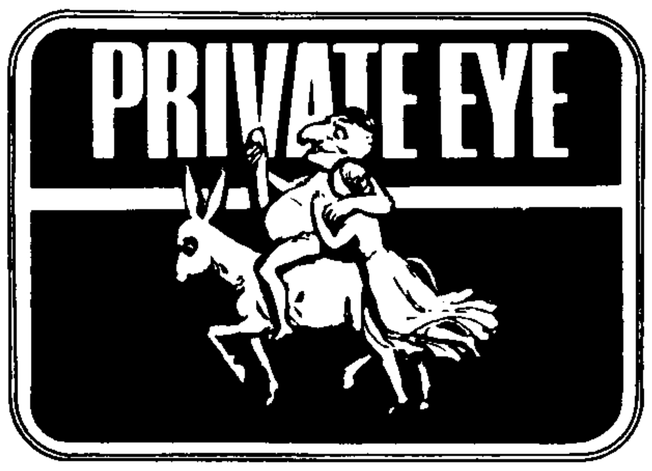


COLOUR SECTION

DETERMINED to privatise the Royal Mail, the Government is dishing out more and more fat contracts to private delivery firms and then gloating over the resultant losses to the publicly-owned operation and its subsidiaries, such as Parcelforce.

In July Andrew Hepworth, a businessman in Catford, south-east London, received a batch of environment department leaflets on summertime smog, delivered by Securicor. He refused to accept them and wrote an angry letter to the department.

"The rise of these private delivery firms," he said, "has already resulted in a vast increase in the numbers of delivery vans on the road; most of them nearly empty for most of the time and all of them criss-crossing each other on longer and longer delivery rounds. This causes unnecessary traffic congestion, accidents and pollution; poisoning and endangering both me and my children and destroying my environment."

Mr Hepworth didn't receive a reply, but he did receive a second batch of leaflets — again delivered by Securicor. His letter is said to have caused great annoyance to the new environment minister, the colourless David Maclean. He has long managerial experience — with Securicor, as it happens, where he apparently learned to work with guard dogs.

SOCIALIST millionaire Owen Oyston has issued legal proceedings against three top Tories.

Oyston alleges conspiracy and slander, among other things, against the former Tory MP for Blackpool South, Sir Peter Blaker, Northern Ireland minister Robert Aitken and Preston-based businessman William Harrison.

According to the writs, Oyston claims there was a gross conspiracy to defame him by using Preston-based former fish and chip shop owner Michael Murrin to mount an investigation into Oyston's affairs over a ten-year period.

Murrin will himself receive two writs: one for defamation; the other asking the court to jail him for contempt in relation to earlier proceedings. Others — including a couple of hacks and assorted private detectives — can also expect writs.

ONE of the more interesting aspects of the Mona Bauwens libel action against the *People* has been the constant assertion that her father, Jaweed Al-Ghussein, was a moderate within the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

At the time of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Mr Al-Ghussein spoke out publicly against the attacks. This may have had as much to do with commercial realism as political moderation, however.

To understand why, one must look at the case of a small property company, Rugby Properties plc, which has fallen victim to the recession and is now in liquidation.

Its primary banker was the United Bank of Kuwait, which lent money on property owned by Rugby, which in turn was owned by Al-Ghussein interests. It was after the invasion — and presumably for sound commercial reasons — that the bank called in the receiver and pulled the plug on this small outfit.

Likewise, Mr Al-Ghussein's condemnation of the invasion was no doubt for sound political reasons and had nothing to do with commercial interests. The United Bank of Kuwait no doubt fully welcomed his support, and did not pull the rug from under his company simply because Mr Al-Ghassein happened to be a senior Palestinian.

PS: Two other Rugby directors, before they resigned, were Sir Barny Hayhoe, the ex-Tory MP, and Sir Frank Rogers, a former permanent secretary to the MoD and currently on the board of the *Daily Telegraph*.

THE Press Complaints Commission, seven editors up, has scored another spectacular own goal.

After months in which it pondered a complaint by Paul Knapmann, Westminster coroner, about an article in the *Mail on Sunday* on Knapmann's decision to cut off the hands of some 21 of those who drowned in the Marchioness disaster, the commission held that the matter was of legitimate public interest and that there were no mistakes in the *Mail* on Sunday's article.

But it promptly *upheld* the coroner's complaint on the ground that he had not been adequately quoted.

SELDOM has an *Eye* article had such startling effect as our revelation in the last issue about the conviction of Dennis Tulloch, from north London, for "possession" of crack cocaine.

As we wrote, Mr Tulloch was convicted solely on the evidence of detective constables Barry Lyons and Gordon Palumbo of Stoke Newington police. Within a week of our article hitting the streets, Mr Tulloch's lawyers were in the appeal court applying for their client's release on bail, pending an appeal.

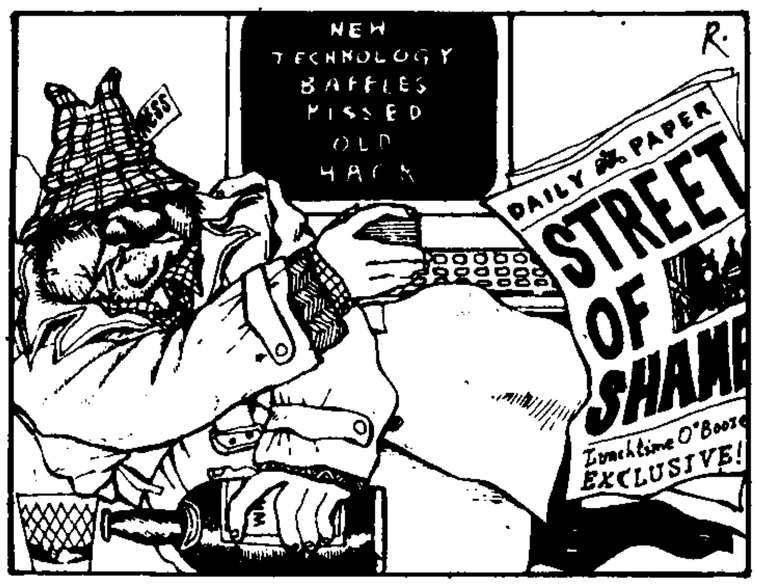
After a secret two-hour hearing, the judge agreed. The Crown Prosecution Service did not oppose the application.

IN OKLAHOMA federal prison Brett Kimberlin is serving an additional five years' sentence — and all because "Dyslexic Dan" Quayle may or may not have smoked marijuana (and inhaled) in contravention of American family values.

As reported in *Eye* 746, a few days before the 1988 election Kimberlin was going to tell the press about his sales of exotic smoking substances to the future vice-president. The director of the Bureau of Prisons instead had him locked up in a 4ft by 6ft detention cell to which he has been returned whenever there seemed a likelihood of him speaking to outsiders. Originally his parole eligibility was 1989 — but it has now been put back to 1994.

A federal judge ruled last summer that there were grounds for a "freedom of speech" hearing on Kimberlin's case, but that was appealed by the Bureau of Prisons. The case will be heard on 16 October — just in time for the elections. At least Clinton gave his peccadillo, Gennifer Flowers, a job, not a five-year sentence.

"Ve vere only taking orders!"



HOW THEY ARE RELATED

PETRONELLA "Petsy" Wyatt, the tiresome young daughter of Lord Wyatt of Weeford, used her pseudonymous "Mandrake" column in the *Sunday Telegraph* last weekend to defend Norman Lamont, rebuking the *Sun* for daring to criticise his brilliant stewardship of the exchequer.

What she neglected to mention was that the chancellor is a close friend of hers (and of her father); and that only last month the Lamonts and the Wyatts enjoyed a holiday in Italy together.

Meanwhile, la Wyatt has also appointed herself chief defender of Rupert Murdoch, writing puff-pieces for William Shawcross's sympathetic new biography of the Dirty Digger and denouncing reviewers who criticise it. Again, she is not exactly a disinterested observer; Petsy's *pater* collects a hefty salary from News International for writing a pisspoor column in the *News of the Screws*.

AMAZING though it may seem, a tycoon has been found who wishes to buy the sinking *Observer*. He is crown prince Khaled of Saudi Arabia.

However, it is by no means certain that Tiny Rowland will wish to sell to him. Though the loss-making Sunday is a luxury he can ill afford in Lonrho's present straitened circumstances, Rowland nevertheless finds it a useful business accessory. When he recently went into partnership with the Libyan government, for instance, he impressed Colonel Gadaffi no end by forcing the *Observer* to publish articles praising the Tripoli regime. Similarly, when he had a brief falling-out with the government of Kenya last year, he swiftly brought the Kenyans to their senses by getting the *Observer* to attack the "corruption" of Daniel Arap Moi.

No one is more desperate for Rowland to hang on to the *Observer* than editor Donald "Busy" Trelford, who must know that he would be sacked instantly by any new proprietor. To persuade Tiny the paper has a future, he is currently spending millions of pounds on a much-hyped "relaunch" of the *Observer* magazine, complete with an expensive designer logo and an equally expensive new editor (£104,000-a-year prodigy Simon "Wall-to-Wall-Pussy" Kelner).

To pay for this, Trelford has to fire as many hacks as possible from the rest of the paper; the latest victim being foreign editor Martin Huckerby, turfed out last week.

Some innocent souls may wonder how the *Observer* can manage without a foreign editor in the coming months, when Maastricht, Yugoslavia, Russia, Somalia and the American elections will fill acres of newsprint. But such questions don't seem to trouble "Busy" Trelford. He is preoccupied with a far more important issue — the *Observer*'s campaign against the exclusion of David Gower from the English cricket team.

THE exciting executive changes at the Snake Pit (aka the *Mail* Empire) have been a triumph — particularly at the *Mail on Sunday* where new editor Jonathan "Jonty" Holborrow has already lost and/or alienated huge numbers of staff he inherited from Stewart Steven.

No sooner had he arrived than deputy editor Jim Anderson walked — as the song says, with no particular place to go. Alan Cochrane arranged to join La Bollard's *Sunday Express*; Adam Edwards followed Steven to the *Evening Standard*; and Graham Gourlay, the features editor, also resigned. (Shortly before he left the *MoS* in the mid-1980s, Holborow's last words to Gourlay were: "If I ever return to this newspaper, you'll work here over my dead body.")

Holborow's new chief henchman on the paper is another product of the *Mail* factory, the urbane wit Roddy Gilchrist, who has an additional role as head of Associated Newspapers' satellite broadcasting interests. It is the teaming of Holborow and Gilchrist that has provoked feature writers Matthew Norman, Jonathan Margolies and Sinclair McKay, deputy features editor Rebecca Tyrell and critics Pete Clark and Alexander Waugh, to tender their resignations. The *MoS* is now like the Marie Celeste.

The Rothermere reshuffle has also intensified the fierce rivalry between Holborow and Paul Dacre that marked the two men's time together at the *Daily Mail*, which Dacre now edits. The pair were known as Sir David English's dobermans, and when they weren't terrorising hacks they were trying to tear each other's throats out.

Holborow's skill is said to be in the area of news, not features, which is Dacre's forte.

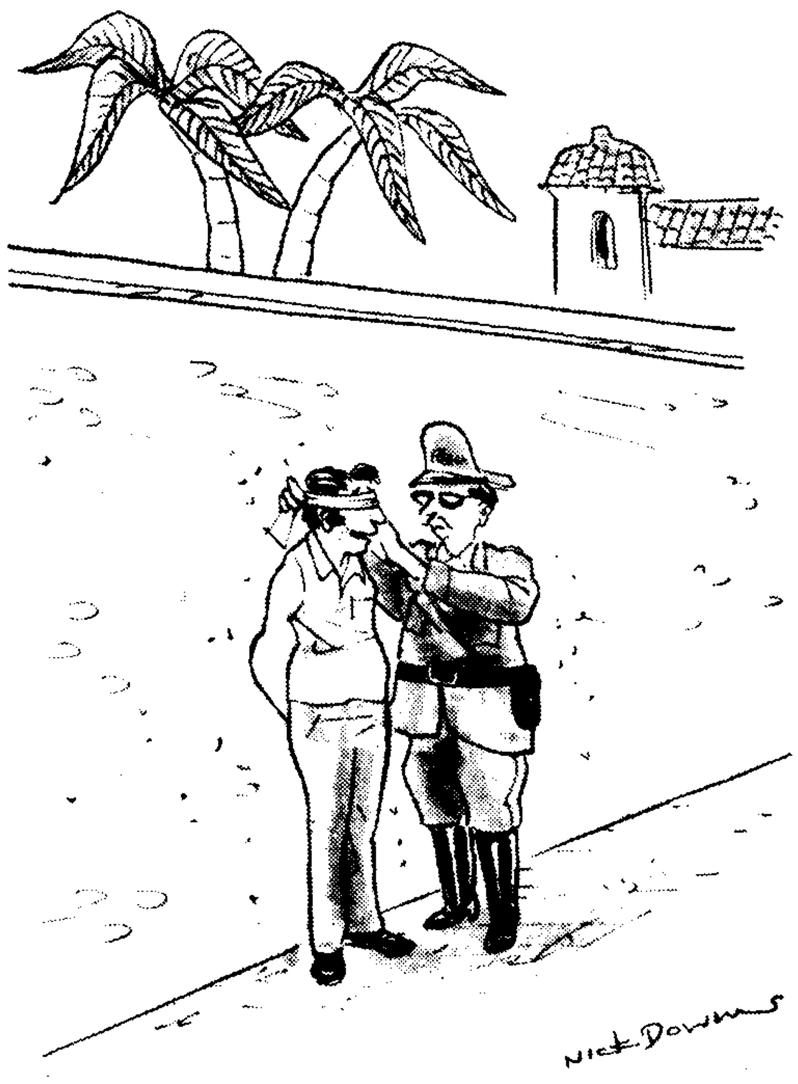
Ironically the area where the *MoS* now seems weakest is the area of Holborow's supposed prowess. The recent front-page story about a palace plot to undermine the Princess of Wales, based on a revised edition of a "biography" of the princess by ludicrous self-styled royal insider Lady Colin Campbell, has proved an embarrassment. Perhaps the rivalry between Holborow and Dacre might explain why the *Daily Mail* tried so vigorously to discredit Lady Colin Campbell and the *MoS*'s front-page story.

Indeed, the Rothermere camp would now appear to be split *three* ways. The *Standard* under Stewart Steven — presumably aghast at the direction in which Holborow is taking his old title — also exposed Lady Colin Campbell as a bogus expert, declaring with the *Daily Mail* that the letter purporting to come from a palace official, on which her story was based, was a fake.

GUFFAWS all round at the *Grauniad*, where twentysomething arts editor Jocelyn "Miss" Targett has been caught applying for a job elsewhere.

Targett wanted to be showbiz editor of *YOU Magazine*, but was beaten to the hugely important post by Sean Macaulay, a former features editor at *Punch*.

It was only a few months ago that Targett was telling friends of his ambition to be editor of the entire *Grauniad* by his early thirties, thus emulating the legendary C.P. Scott.



"I was quoted out of context"

I-BSkyB

Page Three new girl Michelle Collins used to advise people on how to get the best signal for satellite TV. But we found Birmingham dish Michelle, 23, gave us the best picture simply by taking her clothes off.

Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Stuart Harris.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MATTHEW SYMONDS, ludicrous deputy editor of the *Indescribablyboring*, has sucked up to his boss Andreas Whittam-Strobes by writing a vile piece about Kensington Place, the poseurs' eaterie in Notting Hill.

Symonds's whingeing article appeared alongside a puff for the restaurant by Reggie Nadelson, so the paper can claim fairness was observed. But his list of complaints (the uncomfortable chairs; the service; and the "cavalier approach to reservations") includes no mention of the restaurant's most egregious offence.

A couple of years ago Whittam-Strobes booked a table for 9pm on a Friday night only to find that it had been reallocated when he and his party turned up half an hour late. His dignity slighted, Whittam-Strobes wrote to the restaurant demanding an apology. Happily the cocky cooks refused to acknowledge any wrong.

READERS of the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* were recently treated to a full-page feature on the first inside news page on how wonderfully Coventry City was doing in the premier division.

The piece, by news editor Peter Mitchell, trilled on about the dancing girls, pop singer Sonia etc, and carried a big photo plugging Sky. Strangely, Mitchell forgot to mention that the *Coventry Evening Torygraph* is a major shareholder in Coventry City and, more interestingly, that the cash-strapped publisher can expect a useful dividend from Highfield Road this season.

MURDOCH SPECIAL

JUST AS the ageing Rupert Murdoch turns to God for guidance, so the brightest and best of British journalists are indulging in unashamed hero worship of His Holiness the Digger.

The leader of the choir is former campaigning journalist William Shawcross, whose 600-page biography does for Murdoch what Joe Haines did for Robert Maxwell. Shawcross has written a hagiography of such undiluted *arslikhan* that some of the more intelligent reviewers have felt obliged to find a reason for it. Most have concluded that the wide-eyed Shawcross is a tiny bit naive and that he has had the wool pulled over his eyes by the charming and irresistible Rupert.

This is probably the right explanation. And nowhere was the Shawcross naivete more apparent than in those parts of his book which touch on the numerous occasions on which Murdoch's career got a healthy boost from British and American security services.

It was naivete, plainly, that stopped Shawcross examining in depth the mysterious sacking in 1975 of Gough Whitlam, the elected prime minister of Australia, by the unelected governor-general, Sir John Kerr. How does Shawcross deal with this? On page 168 he writes: "There are grounds for the belief that the United States was alarmed by the radical direction of the Whitlam government and the Central Intelligence Agency had a hand in the 'dirty tricks' to destabilise it". Was the hysterical anti-Whitlam tone of the (previously pro-Whitlam) Murdoch press part of those dirty tricks? Tauntingly, and naively, Shawcross does not tell us.

On page 172, Shawcross writes: "There were allegations of CIA interference. Kerr was rumoured to have links with the agency through his membership of various South Pacific cultural and legal groups." Were those rumours true? Shawcross does not say, even though Kerr's links with western intelligence emerge clearly from official documents and from the record of the Australian parliament.

Intelligence services also played a major role in the Westland crisis in 1986, during which Murdoch newspapers strongly supported Mrs Thatcher against her resigning defence secretary, Michael Heseltine. Naively, again, Willie Shawcross has left this episode out of his book. There are no references to Westland, to its then chairman, the City spook Sir John Cuckney, nor even to the support given by Murdoch's heroine, Margaret Thatcher, to the bid for Westland by Sikorski, nor to the much-reported and blatant support for the Sikorski bid by MI5 and the CIA. Since he does not discuss the episode, Shawcross could not be expected to disclose that at the time of the Westland crisis his hero Murdoch sat on the board of Sikorski's parent company, United Technologies.

The numerous occasions when Murdoch and his newspapers have been hand in glove with intelligence have been entirely overlooked. Indeed, the suggestion that R. Murdoch might be friendly with western intelligence would, no doubt, be incredible to his hagiographer.

But Shawcross is not always right about these things. *Eye* readers will recall (from our issue on 24 April) the unequivocal assurance he gave the *Observer* in March about well-documented reports that Jan Kavan, a former Czech dissident, worked for the hated Czech secret police, the St B. "After 20 years of writing about Czechoslovakia," pontificated Shawcross, "I find it impossible to believe that he [Kavan] was a secret police agent."

The same *Observer* article carried this mysterious paragraph: "Among his contacts Kavan knew a British citizen — Mr X — who the St B had identified to their satisfaction as a 'British intelligence officer' ". This Mr X was William Shawcross; and he went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that the *Observer* did not name him.

He even threatened to sue for libel, which amazed *Observer* hacks who know Shawcross as a relentless campaigner for free speech. He is a founder member of the Free Speech pressure group, article 19 of which specifically objects to gagging libel actions. The *Eye* can report that the publication of *Murdoch* by Shawcross has been celebrated as lavishly at headquarters of Murdoch's News Corporation as it has at Vauxhall Bridge Road, London (MI6) and Langley, Virginia (CIA).

THE Conservative Party's inept handling of the economy is in keeping with its curious stewardship of its own financial affairs.

First there was the huge embarrassment of party treasurer Lord Beaverbrook having to leave his job because of his own imminent bankruptcy. Now it is amusing to note that the party's vice-chairman in charge of finance, Tim Smith MP, does not have an exactly unblemished record himself, even though he's a boring accountant.

A little-known item on Smith's CV is his past directorship of Cypher Communications, the company that published media golden turkey *City of London Magazine* in the heady summer of 1991. This was the "brainchild" of one Alistair Fairley, former news editor of *Accountancy Age* and former editor of *Management Consultancy Magazine*.

The dire publication managed three issues before expiring under the burden of its own hubris. Staff saw their salary cheques clawed back by the company's receivers, who managed to retrieve a pile of expensive equipment from the editorial office in the basement of Fairley's Hackney abode (not surprisingly, Fairley gave a PO box number as the magazine's business address).

In the wake of this humiliating failure, Fairley decamped to Spain. The *Eye* was among the creditors of Cypher Communications when it went bust (we were owed £650 for a display ad). No doubt Tim Smith made sure Conservative Central Office was fully aware of this ignominious chapter in his business career.

AS THE economy sank further into disaster over the summer, Norman ("Steady As She Sinks") Lamont was cruising the Med on a £500-a-day yacht.

One port of call visited by the chancellor was the sumptuous £450-a-night Pellicano Hotel in Porto Ercole, Italy. There he sat down to a £100-a-head lunch with Thatcher bootlicker Lord Wyatt of Weevil. But what is more intriguing is Lamont's close friendship with the hotel's owner, Italian businessman Roberto Scio.

Scio has a controversial record as a roving trade ambassador for Bophuthatswana, the South African "homeland" which the British Government does not recognise, and has made a multi-million mint out of construction contracts with Bophuthatswana.

One deal was to build a new power station which cost almost as much as the homeland's annual budget. Built five years ago, it is still not in use and is set to become Africa's most notorious "White Elephant". Another controversial Scio deal is the proposed purchase by Bophuthatswana of a 50 per cent stake in his other lush Italian hotel in Palo, near Rome. The planned £6 million investment has caused a huge row in Bophuthatswana.

The new finance minister said the money should be used to feed the starving, cope with serious drought problems and build schools for the impoverished. But Scio has the ear of President Mangope, who likes to collect luxury mansions around the world: he owns them in London, Paris and Washington.

Why not have one in Rome, too, close to Scio, his Italian trade ambassador and close friend of Norma.

THE CONTINUED survival of David Mellor is a big relief for football pools PR firm Westminster Communications.

"John Thomas" Mellor, as he is now known in Whitehall, is a crony and lookalike of Westminster's managing director, Richard Faulkner, and is responsible for introducing the new national lottery.

The lottery is expected to halve profits for the pools companies. As a soccer fan, Mellor is well aware of the largesse Littlewoods and other pools promoters prudently bestow on football through their front organisation, the Football Trust, which is run by Faulkner.

So long as Mellor lasts the pools firms have high hopes of saving at least some of their bacon by operating the national lottery on the Government's behalf. Nor can the presence on Westminster's board of directors of Tory MPs Sir Keith Speed and, more important, Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the Tory backbenchers, be exactly unhelpful.

THE CHAOS in Birmingham Sparkbrook following *Eye* revelations of the unsavoury link between MP Roy Hattersley and the sinister British Kashmiri Association (BKA) has turned to farce as Fattersley's right-hand man has eloped to Kuwait with his first cousin.

City councillor Khalid Mahmood, constituency secretary and Sparkbrook branch secretary, had helped Hattersley be reselected the last time he was challenged by the constituency's Asian majority. He also backed city council leader Sir "Dick" Knowles, who agreed huge grants for the BKA.

Quite coincidentally, the BKA was Mahmood's employer and its chairman was his dad, Sabir Mirza, also a senior Labour party official. Other family members, also Labour party members, were treasurer, secretary, etc.

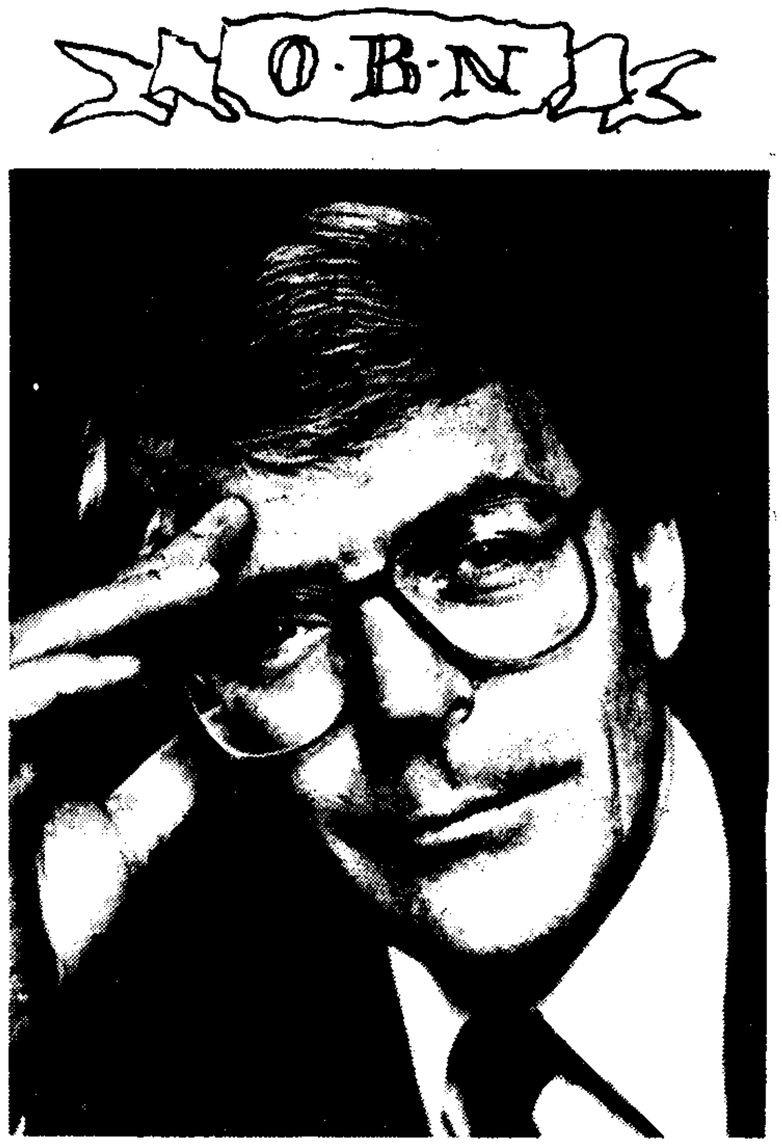
Khalid was effectively being groomed by Fattersley to take over when he takes up his peerage. But now Khalid has blown his chances, eloping to the Middle East and deporting his wife and child to Pakistan.

Mahmood has long been having an affair with Naseem Akhtar, his first cousin. When he recently got a job selling air-conditioning in Kuwait he saw his chance to escape his domineering family and left the country with her, calling from Amsterdam to say "I have the girl" and "get stuffed, Dad".

The news has delighted the Mirza family's myriad political enemies, who are planning a mass takeover of the constituency by higher caste Asians.

But Mahmood's indiscrete, new-style CV may yet take him to the top. Fattersley's last protegé, David Hill, whose mother Rita is Sparkbrook constituency chair, reversed the traditional sexual casting couch roles by deserting his wife for a senior Kinnock aide. He is now director of communications.

'Backbiter'



Transformation: Major's intelligence and strength captured for the first time in a revealing portrait

Sunday Times

Submitted by Jeremy Smith.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

I AM entranced by a new novel, more fascinating than any on the Booker shortlist, to be published next week: *Hatred and Contempt* by the former Tory attorney-general, Lord Rawlinson.

It is a yarn about one "Lord Brackley", an arrogant peer who is accused in a pamphlet of having been responsible for a massacre of Chetniks in wartime Yugoslavia. Brackley sues the pamphlet's author for libel, and then indulges in chicanery galore — intimidating witnesses, having a defence solicitor's flat bugged and pulling strings all over Whitehall and Westminster. Government departments secretly help him.

Eventually the case is heard before a judge whose one skill is knowing how to manipulate juries into providing verdicts satisfactory to the Establishment. He sneers at the defendant for using a foreign rank, but is totally obsequious to Lord Brackley. The closing paragraph makes it clear that, although Brackley wins in court, he did indeed perpetrate the wartime betrayal of which he was accused. What clinches the issue is the belated discovery of a letter correcting a departure date on which the case had hinged.

For some reason, I gather, the *Daily Telegraph* has asked Count Nikolai Tolstoy to review this gripping yarn.

What does Lord Aldington, Tolstoy's old foe, make of it all? When I told him about the book last week, he immediately remarked: "It's about me" — though clearly this cannot be the case, since a reputable publisher would not print such a shocking and gratuitous libel against a man who has already won more than £1 million in the courts.

Aldington admitted that he and Lord Rawlinson, though they were both Tory MPs together and are now colleagues in the Lords, were "not close". However, he added that Rawlinson was "an admirable man. We'll have to see what he's written. I look forward to it. It'll be great fun but it won't be malicious — at least I don't think so."

THE CHILL wind of republicanism, I note, has rustled the autumn leaves of loyal North Wiltshire where the knives are out for Prince Andrew, the Falklands veteran.

As if the poor cuckold didn't have enough on his plate, members of North Wiltshire Ratepayers' Association are now furious about a £1,600 bill incurred by local police in giving special protection to the prince when he made a private visit to Castle Combe Golf Club.

As the association's newsletter says: "It does not seem right for the chargepayers to bear the cost of security for a VIP making a private call on a golf course which charges £17,000 for individual membership." The association wants the police authority to levy a charge on the golf club. How the mighty are fallen...

● *MY SHARES in British Aerospace may be dropping in value, but I for one shall not carp at the company's largesse to Those Who Really Matter.*

Princes Khaled and Turki bin Nasser, both Saudi royals and sons of Prince Sultan, the Saudi defence chief, were visitors to the Farnborough air show some two weeks ago, staying in opulent apartments at 25 Dorchester Square and living largely on Big Macs.

Their lowly drivers were given £100 a time to buy these delicacies, the bill for the apartments and the take-aways being generously picked up by British Aerospace.

Pseuds Corner

He [Sir Nicholas Fairbairn] had a surprising request for a man manacled to controversy, often of a prurient nature, throughout his life: "Don't make this too sexy. I have an image. It's because I've addressed a central problem — the relationships between men and women. My attitude to women is one of adoration. Okay, what is the explanation of the elegance of that waitress? She's not asking you to go to bed with her, but she's trying to prove something. Why should she have doubts about herself?" His voice dropped lower. "The reason is that the birth process is one where she was rejected by her mother, by her rival."

'TATTLER'
Sunday Express Magazine

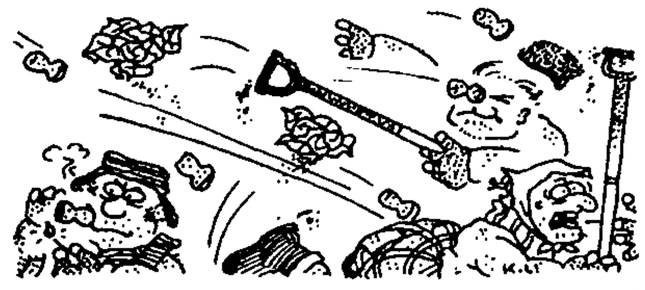
The regular congregation numbers the antique dealer, Christopher Gibbs; the beautiful harpist Patricia Erzini, who met her future husband on a Cambridge railway platform (then lived in a vast Tetouan palace where she was visited twice a year by British missionaries); and the exotic Lilian Balençin de Balençin, who played a nun in the American revival of *The Miracle*, and who, apart from designing spectacular hats (her Gulf War hat being a map of Kuwait topped by an oil derrick fashioned out of pipe cleaners), makes portraits of people's pets in *crépe de chine*.

NICHOLAS SHAKESPEARE
Sunday Telegraph

"I did actually piss in Duchamp's urinal. Art history in the making. I'm surprised I'm not much more famous for it." Brian Eno smiles. "There's such a nice symmetry to it. At the beginning of the century Marcel Duchamp brings this thing up and turns it into an art object; at the end of the century I piss in it and turn it back into a urinal. Like closing a loop, ending a story. My talk was all about this, all about how value is conferred, and particularly how it's defended, in the pop world and the art world."

BRIAN ENO
Time Out

At the height of the Urals we crossed from Europe into Asia, and passengers gathered in the corridors to see the white obelisk beside the track which marks the frontier. Dusk was falling through the trees, and I marked our passage with a bottle of champagne — one of a case I had procured in Moscow for the



journey. Every evening their corks went off like cannons out of the windows. I like to think of the bemusement of the Russian peasants hoeing their cabbages when mysteriously, out of the twilight, a champagne cork hits them on the back of the head.

STANLEY STEWART
Times Saturday Review

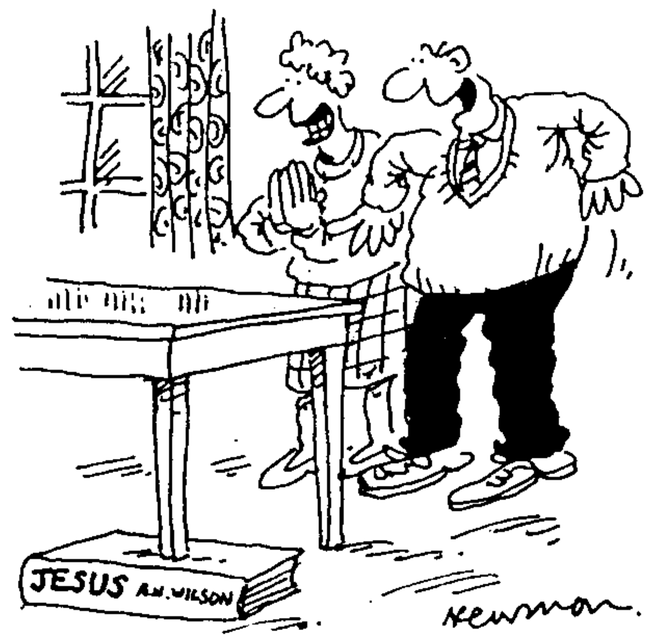
My wife is enormously industrious, too. Apart from being the greatest clearer up ever, she runs the preserves cupboard and makes all sorts of exotic things like quince vodka, wonderful marmalades, chutneys and vanilla pears. She also cuts out recipes and glues them all on to old pieces of A4 paper. These go into loose-leaf files under the headings of meat, poultry, fish, fruit, vegetables, pasta and so on. We call this the *Oman Strong Cookbook*.

As for food, I suppose it's true to say one's now entering one's polenta period.

SIR ROY STRONG
The Times

CONTRIBUTORS: T.J. Willson, Penelope Parfitt, Anon, A. Mackie, C. West.

£10 paid for entries



"It's a miracle! It's cured our wobbly table!"

WHAT IS it about Kate Sissons, buxom *Daily Mail* gossip hackette, that makes her so irresistible?

I ask this in a spirit of innocent inquiry, as it was dear, sweet Kate who only a few years ago made the mistake of inviting *Evening Standard* columnist Peter McKay back to her flat for a bowl of spaghetti after a drinks party.

My readers may recall that, having eaten his fill, McHackey retired for a few moments and when Kate entered her bedroom she was greeted with the sight of the naked McHackey, who exclaimed: "Are you ready for me, lassie?"

More recently it was Kate's good fortune to find herself sitting next to guest speaker Cecil Parkinson at the annual diarists' lunch, hosted this year by a champagne firm. I would hate to be accused of indiscretion by my high-minded colleagues, so I will only say that Kate was the recipient of an inordinate amount of accidental knee and thigh contact and was amazed when Parky popped his card, complete with his direct line office phone number, into her hands.

MY FRIEND Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill is determined to shake off his philistine image.

The *Sunday Times* review section recently carried a mildly erotic front-page photograph of the New York-based Korean virtuoso violinist, Chee Yun, the accompanying inside spread by the paper's New York correspondent, Geordie Grieg, describing her as "one of the most talented and in-demand violinists in the US".

However, no publicity has so far been given to the fact that while waiting to give concerts in Glasgow and London on the 20 and 25 September, Chee Yun has been resident at Brillo's pad in Onslow Gardens, South Kensington, where, I am reliably informed, she has been giving private recitals and violin lessons to the culture-starved Murdoch editor.

Susan Douglas, a *Sunday Times* executive, has even been deputed with the task of chaperoning Chee Yun around London while Neill is otherwise engaged. History has not so far related whether Neill joined Woody Allen as a celebrity Korean-fancier *before* or *after* she was lovingly profiled in Brillo's rag.

INTERESTING news from Japan where publisher Haruki Kadokawa has thrown a shroud over the ceaseless exhibitionism of Madonna, the talented American stage artiste who can sing, dance and simulate masturbation all at the same time.

Mr Kadokawa's company, Kadokawa Shobe, had the hormonally-challenged performer's photographic "book" *Sex* under contract, but having prised apart its pages and examined the explicit photographs inside, Mr Kadowaka politely said "No, thank you."

Whether this was due to the stringent Japanese laws about pornographic photographs or Mr Kadokawa's personal taste, I do not know. But Ms Madonna's American publisher, Warner, is taking legal advice with a view to suing Mr Kadokawa for breach of contract. We do live in a material world, don't we?

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

SO FAREWELL then, Minto House. But I cannot let its passing go unremarked — nor the behaviour of its resourceful owner and destroyer, the 6th Earl of Minto.

Minto House stood near Hawick in the Borders. It had a 16th century core, was remodelled by William Adam, remodelled again in the early 19th century for the 1st earl, who was governor-general of India, and further improved by Robert Lorimer at the end of the century. After it was requisitioned in the second world war, the Minto family tired of the place and leased it to a private girls' school.

When that closed in the late 1960s the 5th earl, now comfortable in Minto Home Farm, threw in the sponge and, in 1973, secured permission for demolition. Instead, however, he merely stripped out the lead and internal fittings and left his ancestral home to rot.

Perhaps the battle to save Minto House was lost years ago; perhaps it did not deserve public money spent on it when there are much more deserving cases in Scotland. Even so, there is no excuse for what happened next. The 6th earl decided to do something about the harmless ruin standing by the golf course on the estate he inherited. When a cynical project to sell the house to the Japanese and ship the stones halfway round the world fell through, he decided upon rapid action. At the end of August demolition men suddenly moved in and began by setting the house on fire.

Outraged, those who believed the house could and should be saved appealed to the secretary of state for Scotland, who, with unusual resolve, slapped a grade A listing on it. But the earl remained master of the situation. Borders regional council, of which he just happens to be convener, decided to put a dangerous structure notice on the house — overruling its listing status — and, as parts were demolished to make the structure safe, other parts became unsafe and they too had to be taken down. Game, set and match to the earl.

Two aspects of this case merit comment. One is that few seem to wish to oppose the earl. He is a powerful man. Scotland may aspire to socialism, but not in the Borders. No one will challenge Minto's belief that he can do exactly what he wants with his property. Noblesse Oblige. If any ordinary spiv developer did what Minto has done (and they try), everyone would be up in arms. But in this case the Forth & Borders region of the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland was conspicuous by its silence and the planning department of Borders regional council notable for its supine acquiescence.

The other is Lord Minto's claim that he had "welcomed restoration" and had made "personal efforts over 26 years to find alternative uses". The economy of this was exploded by a letter in the *Scotsman* on 14 September from SAVE Britain's Heritage (based in London) revealing how, in 1987, a group had set up a building preservation trust to acquire and restore Minto House. It had fruitful discussions with the Scottish Office and the local authority, but met the obstacle of the earl: "My son and I do not wish to sell the house and grounds, but to keep control of the future plans for that part of the estate within our own hands."

Gilbert Edward George Lariston Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, 6th Earl of Minto, revels in all the trappings of hereditary status and authority except for the tiresome chore of maintaining a family seat. He would seem to think that our historic building legislation — which requires that alternative uses be sought before demolition is allowed — does not apply to him. No sense of public duty when it comes to old buildings. In fact, he *hates* them. For there is also the case of the curiously named Fatlips Castle, the medieval predecessor of Minto House. A grade B listed tower, restored in the 19th century as a shooting box and private museum, this scheduled monument is now falling into ruin. Tower houses are the most desirable building type in Scotland, but attempts by various individuals and bodies to restore and use it have met with the consistent opposition of the owner, Lord Minto. The same is true of a stone 19th century forester's cottage on the estate. Can he explain why, I wonder?

***PITCHFORD HALL** in Shropshire is rather different. Here the family, who bought the estate in 1473, long to stay in the house but they must sell up — victims of Lloyd's and our insane tax system that actively penalises those who try to maintain and repair historic buildings.*

With such fiscal legislation eating away at the ancient fabric of the nation, having a heritage minister and English Heritage is just a sham. Forget, for the moment, about controversial listings of tin churches or concrete schools: if ever a building deserved saving entire, it is Pitchford. It is everything the English like and hold most dear: half-timber, wobbly old beams, 500 years of continuous history, panelling, priests' holes and family portraits. And Queen Victoria stayed there.

Mr and Mrs Colthurst offered the house, its contents and 76 acres to the nation for £1.8 million. English Heritage, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the National Trust all supported the proposal. But Dave Mellor, secretary of state for young actresses, casually turned it down and now the house will be sold and its contents dispersed.

Pitchford may well have been a victim of bad timing, for Our Dave, perhaps rattled by the bad publicity he has been receiving of late, seems to have been anxious to show his Cabinet colleagues and the treasury that underneath it all he was really tough and sound and one of them.

'Piloti'

Bankers

MORE NEWS of the hidden and unexpected costs high street banks see fit to award themselves.

Those like students and pensioners with modest bank accounts who only make small payments using a debit card can do their balances serious harm in no time at all.

One young person made three such payments in one day and, being over her agreed overdraft limit, incurred a charge of £15 — even more than the payments she had made. She only found out about the "facility excess charge" when reading her statement.

Meanwhile, if one wants to turn a cheque into cash as quickly as possible, Lloyds Bank insists on allowing three days between receipt of a cheque and crediting the funds to an account. Even express clearance, for which the bank charges a fee, doesn't speed the clearance, merely satisfying the bank that the cheque will be honoured and enabling it to "lend" the money to the account holder while the cheque is cleared. If one's account is overdrawn, the bank will add the value of the "loaned" funds to one's overdraft and charge interest on it.

JAMIE COHEN, 20, works for a firm of West End accountants and is financially independent, even though he lives at home with his parents.

Some months ago his application to hire a satellite dish from Granada TV rentals was refused after the firm ran a credit check on him. The check was made through CCN Credit Systems in Nottingham, and Mr Cohen wrote to ask them to send him a copy of his affairs. Back came seven pages, no detail of which referred to him.

Mr Cohen's grandmother had bought the present family home through a building society after they had repossessed it from a Mr Levy. The credit file contained five references to the same Mr Levy, and the rest referred to Mr Cohen's father, whose business had collapsed but whose debts had been paid off. Not one of the references concerned Jamie Cohen himself.

He wrote to CCN saying he felt it very unfair that he should be refused credit on the basis of his parent's misfortune — let alone the difficulties suffered by the previous occupant of the house in which he now lived. (His mother was even registered as defaulting on an M&S credit card when she had not owned such a card.)

By way of reply, Mr Cohen was told: "CCN Credit Systems stores information by address and therefore a search on an applicant's address may reveal information about other members of the family or indeed other present or previous occupiers of the property. When someone moves house their records do not always move with them!"

He was told that he had the right to add a note of correction to his (and everyone else's) file, a sample of which they provided.

Alistair de Warwood, head of CCN consumer affairs, told the Eye: "The lender may suppose there is a financial connection between people of the same name living at the same address. However, as from July next year we are amending our system and will not return other surname records. We hope that with this re-organisation the father's problems will not be reflected in the son's credit application. Until then, I advise customers in this event to add a notice of correction and to ask the supplier to manually check the credit applications — so that it is not overlooked."

● *One reader received an interesting letter from Lloyds saying that someone had asked the bank for a credit reference on them. It was, the bank said, no longer policy to give out credit ratings willy-nilly, and would only do so with the customer's approval. How considerate!*

A shame, then, that hidden in the small print was the news that granting approval to Lloyds to issue a credit reference also allows the bank to charge £20 to the account holder for issuing it.

PRISON NEWS

ROBERT TAYLOR, say his supporters, is the victim of a miscarriage of justice. Outraged by the recent refusal of the appeal court to quash his conviction for armed robbery, he absconded from HMP Garth while on home leave less than a month later.

He was recaptured after a car chase, but the interesting part of the incident was where he lay low: he had apparently been comfortably ensconced in a caravan in Rhyll with Julie Thompson, a prison officer from Garth, who is currently suspended.

Surely this takes the rehabilitative relationship prison officers are supposed to develop with their charges a little too far? But no doubt Taylor's relationship with this particular "screw" was entirely proper and in no way connected with the exceptional decision to grant him home leave so soon after his appeal court knockback.

EYE TV

SINCE last autumn when Channel Four gave the Royal Ulster Constabulary the names of 20 prominent people in the province connected with plots to assassinate Catholics, the RUC has been busy investigating — not the 20 people, of course, but the anonymous "Source A" who gave information about them on a *Despatches* programme by Box Productions.

Such was the fury of the RUC that it went to court to demand the name of the source, invoking the draconian prevention of terrorism act. When C4 refused to reveal the name, the Government took it to court for contempt, asking the judge to sequestrate the channel and so put it out of business. The court refused, slapping the channel on the wrist with a relatively small £75,000 fine. Outraged at this leniency, the RUC has continued its campaign with the help of friendly journalists. Its attitude to Source A has shifted sharply.

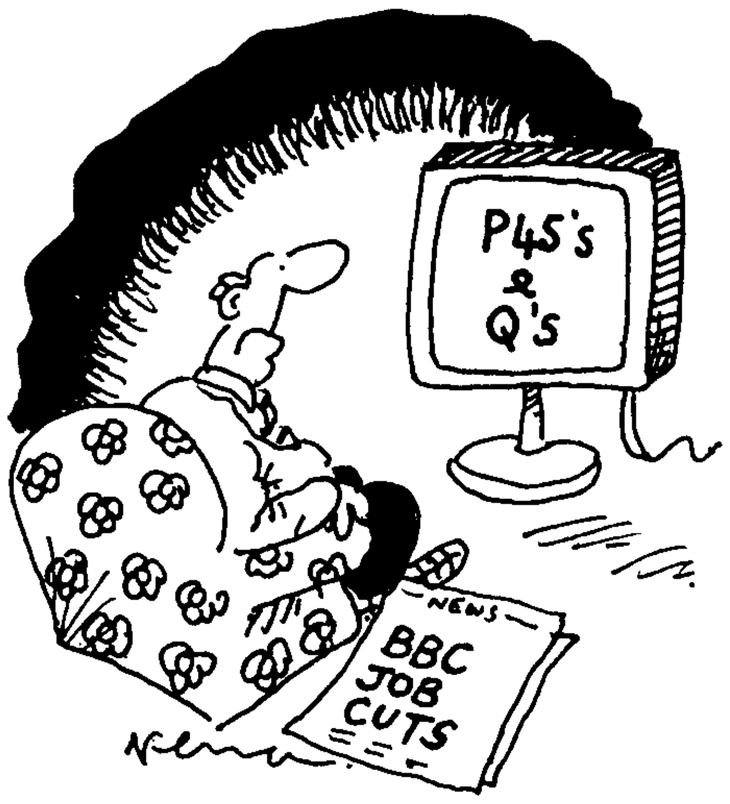
The RUC's first approach was that it knew perfectly well who the source was, and that he was a fake. When Channel Four (and others) started to ask why, then, was the RUC going to such lengths to find out who he was, the police changed their tune.

On 2 August, the *Sunday Times* published an article by Liam Clarke in Belfast which claimed that the whole Channel Four programme was based on "lies". Evidence for this was a loyalist who said he had invented the story about an "inner committee" of Protestant extremists and passed it on to a journalist in 1985. The whole Channel Four story, Clarke alleged, was based on these fantasies seven years ago.

Clarke has been used more and more as the *Sunday Times* man in Belfast since it lost its previous Northern Ireland correspondent, Chris Ryder. Ryder wrote a book which hailed the RUC as probably the bravest, most courageous and fairest police force in the history of the world, and now works for the *Telegraph* where he enthusiastically followed up Clarke's story on 3 August.

The following Sunday (9 August) Clarke was at it again, predicting that the RUC was going to take Channel Four to court once more. Gone was the previous certainty in the RUC that it knew the identity of Source A. Instead "officers are now suggesting that Source A may not be a single man but a 'composite character' made up of the allegations of several different loyalist terrorists".

The attack on Channel Four, which has all the hallmarks of the *Sunday Times* attack on the Thames programme *Death on the Rock* three years ago, was joined enthusiastically by the *Sunday Express* in the glamorous shape of Barrie Penrose. In a remarkable article on 9 August in which he predicted Scotland Yard would soon be interviewing Box Productions staff, Penrose claimed that the programme's producer, Sean McPhilemy, had been deceiving Channel Four by pretending that he had moved from his home for fear of reprisals after his programme.



Penrose quoted Oxford estate agent John Little as saying McPhilemy and his family had "certainly" been living at his Ditchley home. Unfortunately for Penrose, Mr Little has now stated in writing that he never said any such thing; and has confirmed that McPhilemy and his family had certainly *not* been living in his house. Penrose seems to have missed the rather important little (*sic*) word "not".

Mr Little, moreover, was put out that Penrose had rung him pretending to make a routine inquiry about buying the house and *not* declaring that he works for the *Sunday Express*.

THE AMAZING appointment of 35-year-old nonentity accountant Charles Allen as head of Granada TV has heralded new criteria for *meejah* recruitment.

Allen has never made a programme and has no experience even of working for a television company. "I know nothing about television," said the former managing director of a catering company, Compass Services.

Allen was appointed by fellow sandwich-maker and chief executive of Granada Group, Gerry Robinson, who also happily admits his ignorance of TV and is unrepentant. "After all," he told a private meeting of Granada executives, "the head of ICI is not a chemist."

This startling comment could set new standards for hiring top management. Take a sycophantic 35-year-old financial hatchetperson, pay them a £145,000 a year salary and put them in charge of an industry they know nothing about. Brilliant. The recovery of UK Ltd is assured.

Allen's last job — which lasted eight months — was as head of Granada Leisure. This, of course, is how Granada TV will end up.

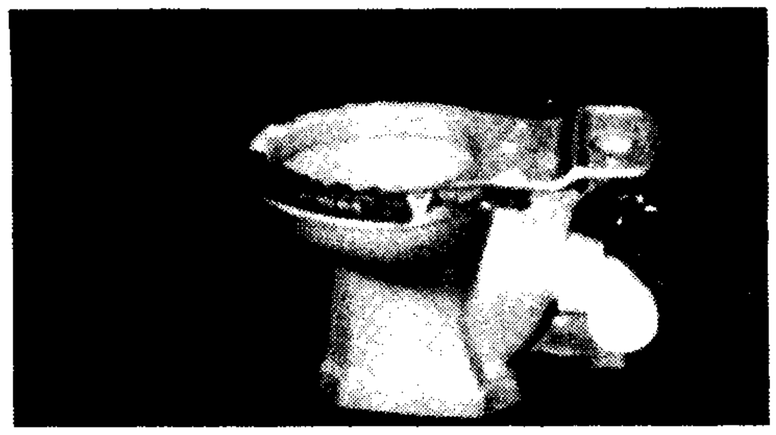
SICKENED by BBC bureaucracy and feebleness, David Jessel and his team on *Rough Justice* have taken off for a more vigorous effort at the same sort of thing on Channel Four.

Jessel and Co scored a number of successes for the BBC, not least in the case of the Darvell brothers from Swansea who were wrongly convicted in 1986 after an orgy of frame-ups and bungles by South Wales police, courts and judges.

Observers felt this might be the end of *Rough Justice*. The BBC has been terrified of the programme from its inception. When it was attacked by lord chief justice Lane in a fit of rage and pique at having to free a man whose wrong conviction had been exposed in the programme, the BBC panicked, snatched the programme off the air, sacked its producers and presenter, and, when its return was grudgingly conceded two years later, hedged it around with so many conditions and obstacles that Jessel and Co could take no more.

But no. The BBC has suddenly woken up to the importance of its programme and is proudly proclaiming a new series. And who will produce it?

Step forward John Ware, best known to *Eye* readers as the man who did his best to deprive former army intelligence officer Colin Wallace of any kind of justice, however rough. (Ware rubbished Wallace in *The Independent* in 1987. Wallace eventually got £30,000 compensation from the Government in 1990.)



GOOD NEWS for television licence-payers. Our exclusive photograph reveals that, presumably as part of his mission to "clean up the BBC", incoming director-general John Birt is installing a new lavatory and en-suite bathroom outside his office on the third floor of Broadcasting House.

At least we now know which pan the BBC is going down...

MILLIONS of football fans who have failed to hook up a satellite dish to receive Sky Sports' exclusive live coverage of the English premier league will be interested to learn that BSkyB has not been playing the game in scheduling its winter programme of matches.

Tottenham Hotspur, with its worst team since the club was last relegated in 1977, will appear on TV four times, beaten only by Liverpool, while early pacesetters such as Blackburn, Coventry and Norwich only get one or two showings.

This has nothing to do with the fact that Spurs is funded by Alan Sugar, the Amstrad doyen whose satellite dishes are, er, not yet selling like hot cakes.

"Who do you think you're looking at, yer pommy bastard!"

WHEN Richard Madeley interviewed Anneka Rice for Granada TV's live daytime programme *This Morning*, he told her during a commercial break that he intended to ask her some questions about her personal life during the next segment, thus provoking her to fly into a rage.

Unfortunately the engineers in the TVSW region kept the faders open during the ad break, so that instead of hearing the various jingles and slogans associated with the products on screen, viewers were treated to an ugly *contretemps* between Madley and Rice.

POP EYE

DESPERATE to live up to its self-appointed title of "Major European City", Manchester recently assembled leading poseurs from the rockbiz for a frighteningly-serious convention on the music industry, In The City.

Record company moguls and brown-nosers who gathered at the birthplace of the rave music culture were not well received by the irrevocably socialist locals. They were barred from the seminars and charged for the gigs, while the expenses-laden delegates went in free. Nor did the "happening" garner any decent publicity.

To add insult to injury, the Labour-run city council (one of the poorest in Britain) donated £25,000 of public money to the event, even though it had been the brainchild of Hacienda nightclub boss Anthony H Wilson, and Elliot Rashman, manager of the platinum-selling Simply Red pop-soul combo. The event was presided over by gorgeous, pouting 24-year-old former Miss England Yvette Livesey, who just happens to be Wislon's girlfriend.

It is unlikely the week-long orgy of lectures, discussions and mindless hedonism will enhance Manchester's reputation with the world's *non*-psychedelic leaders after record company boss Tim Fielding brazenly "swallowed" a tab of rave drug Ecstasy, the dreaded E, before astonished delegates at the Midland Hotel.

During a Pseuds Corner talk called "Life After Rave — one E too many — the next dance steps", Fielding, who is associated with London-based Confusion Records, asked the 100-strong audience for a show of hands over who had taken the mind-bending chemical, the designer drug par excellence of the backward-baseball-cap-wearing generation.

While delegates, who had paid £260 to attend the conference, battled with short-term memory loss to answer his question, Fielding said the drug had given him the best days of his life, announced that he was taking half a tab of it, then put something in his mouth and washed it down with a glass of water.

Inspector E. Knacker of Greater Manchester drug squad was nowhere to be seen.

HACKWATCH No 30: Financial wiseacres

"STERLING devaluation," we wrote in the last *Eye*, "is no longer a question of if, but when." A week later, on the morning after Black Wednesday, the national press was full of articles explaining in a knowing way that devaluation had of course been inevitable all along.

How odd, then, that these newspapers hadn't thought to mention it earlier. For, as the digest below reveals, in the days before the *debacle* many of them had been giving a very different picture of the likelihood of a sterling crisis.

When he was chancellor of the exchequer, Nigel Lawson regularly advertised his contempt for financial pundits. "Teenage scribblers", as he called them. After the tumultuous events of last week, one begins to see what he meant.

Friday 11 September: An editorial in the *Daily Express* scoffs at talk of devaluation: "Like his predecessor, John Major is not for turning. Once he has negotiated a deal or made a promise, he stands by it... Last night, addressing a CBI dinner in Glasgow, he said that even if other countries devalue or revalue their currency in the European exchange rate mechanism, Britain will not join in. He may have said it before, but it needed to be said... Mr Major's speech should help to steady the pound in the difficult days ahead."

Monday 14 September: The Bundesbank has promised a cut in German interest rates today. "Lamont Pound Victory" is the *Daily Express*'s front-page headline. "The Chancellor won a spectacular victory over the Germans last night — paving the way for a dramatic cut in interest rates," reports Jon Craig, chief European correspondent. "The German move should ease pressure on the pound in currency markets... Yesterday's triumph, besides being a major boost for Mr Lamont after the criticism he has faced over the handling of the economy, will also put John Major in good heart as he heads for the Tory conference in Brighton next month."

On the business pages, *Express* City editor Tom McGhie is in bullish mood. "A devaluation within the ERM would have had a disastrous effect on the pound as the second weakest currency," he comments. "The Bundesbank decision to be taken today has neatly prevented that from happening by taking the strain off the pound." He adds: "When the British market opens this morning... it would not be surprising if the pound also strengthened its position against the mark. Shares should also leap as the prospect of interest rate rises finally recedes."

An editorial in *The Times* is even more unequivocal. "For Britain, last night's package should ensure that sterling holds above its floor in the ERM for the five days remaining until the French vote."

Over at the *Daily Mail*, political editor Gordon Greig announces that the German decision will "certainly" end the pressure for Major to increase interest rates, and "should lift both the stock market and sterling's rate against the mark".

Tuesday 15 September: The Comment column in *The Times*'s Business section sounds the all-clear. True, there is still a chance that British interest rates might have to rise, or that sterling might fall further, but "that possibility now looks insubstantial". The pound now has "credibility". "Currency gyrations and vague threats of financial crashes or interest rate increases have undermined confidence again over the past two months... Consumers and businessmen can now wake from that nightmare and start getting on with the job again, confident of eventual recovery."

In the *Daily Mail*, City editor Andrew Alexander observes that in a fixed exchange-rate system, parity is sacrosanct. "The pound-mark parity is certainly sacrosanct — at least until the weekend," he concludes.

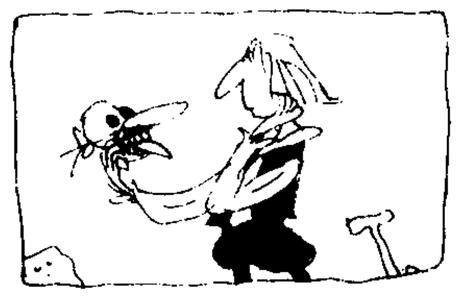
In the *Indescribablyboring*, economics guru Hamish McRae, an ardent admirer of government policies, speculated that the devaluation of the lira might "encourage the markets to celebrate their victory over the lira by taking a pot shot at the next weakest currency in the ERM, the pound." But he stressed: "The evidence of yesterday is that this will not happen and that if the markets did they could be repelled."

Wednesday, 16 September: According to the *Daily Telegraph*'s City Comment, sterling fell yesterday because "traders who have now banked their profits from shorting the lira" were trying to sell the pound short. However, "sterling will be an altogether tougher nut [for them] to crack, with the reserves newly bolstered".

The Times, which favours devaluation, notes that the Prime Minister seems set against it. "Mr Major can struggle on against the money markets. He may well succeed, at least for a while... Until Sunday he is probably safe. The Bank of England can spend its reserves to protect sterling from the worst ravages of the market-place."

Thursday 17 September: Screaming headlines report the horrors of Black Wednesday. But is there any editorial contrition? Far from it.

The Times carries a knowing leader: "It took until early yesterday evening for the government to bow before forces that it should not have been fighting... In the morning Mr Major ordered his Chancellor of the Exchequer to fight a brief battle with the money markets in which victory would have been a miracle." This surely couldn't be the same battle with the markets in which, only 24 hours earlier, the paper had predicted that Major "may well succeed"? Apparently so.



LUVVIES

Beverley was, and is, a gifted writer for both stage and screen. But his true mission in life is to answer the door and the telephone for Maggie. She suffers, one colleague avers, from psychological shingles. She has several layers of skin missing. Being an actress is her destiny and her particular torture.

MICHAEL COVENEY
(on Maggie Smith)
Observer

Submitted by Craig Dodd.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.

Sally Deedes

LAST MONTH a company called Accident Aftercare went into receivership. Its brief had been to pursue insurance companies to recover uninsured losses on behalf of motorists involved in accidents where there was clearly a negligent third party. (As when your car is safely parked outside your home and someone smashes into it. Accident Aftercare would arrange for a replacement vehicle and introduce you to expert solicitors or recovery agents who would pursue your claims against the miscreant insurers.)

Accident Aftercare's work on behalf of aggrieved motorists thus made it less than popular with the big insurance companies. Before receivership, its staff suspected that the large insurers were stalling and unnecessarily contesting claims it made to increase Accident Aftercare's costs, disrupt its cash flow and eventually push it out of business. If this were the case, the big insurers would appear to have succeeded.

This summer, however, there has been one victory in court for another company in the field: 3 Arrows, which has a fleet of 600 cars, 90 percent of which are used in accident hire cases. The firm took Eagle Star and Commercial Union to court for not paying car-hire charges having already admitted accident liability.

The cases were in part defended around an obscure bit of legalese called champerty, which need not detain us. But at Bury crown court Judge Steel found that claims for compensation, which include car hire charges, were legitimate, and that if hiring a replacement vehicle was an appropriate way to put the innocent victim in the position he or she was in before the accident, the claims should be met by the insurers.

Eagle Star and Commercial Union were given 28 days to appeal, and neither came back to court. This judgement may have come too late for Accident Aftercare, but for the innocent car owner involved in an accident it is good news. The delay that some motorists have had to endure before recovering losses may now, due to this established principle, be something of the past.

"Oh, no – the neo-Nazis have got here first"

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

THE SCOTTISH tourist board never refers to it, but late summer in the Highlands is always intolerable thanks to the vampire midge, a mini-mosquito that sucks and chews the flesh. For centuries the only cure has been to stay indoors or light a pipe.

The Scottish version of the *Ceratopogonidae* clan thrives in peat bogs and bonnie glens, and the empty landscape of the Highlands is as attributable to the carnivorous midges as much as to the farming subsidies, so evidence of the end of the insect may be the biggest news Scotland has had this century.

Entomologist Eugen Hayek has been illicitly introducing African mites into the bogs, and they seem to have found the midges as tasty as the midges find humans. Needless to say, this work has been done in the face of official efforts by the Scottish Office, which had thought subsidies for drainage were the only way forward.

Historians do not agree that the midge was always there. Is it possible that some mishap in the foodchain caused by the Highland clearances altered the balance of insect life? Traces of the midge seem to be found only intermittently by micro-archaeology. Perhaps the immigrant mite is only replacing a creature lost in the last few centuries.

If the midge is on the way out, think what it will mean for property prices in the Highlands.

WHILE the clever people at the treasury and Bank of England were burning millions of pounds last week, the ministry of agriculture issued a modest test revealing that in its own humble way it could match its brainy rivals.

The estimated expenditure in support of the common agricultural policy (CAP) in 1992 will be £27,775,000,000 or, as it was expressed before the ERM fell apart, 39,857,000,000 ecus. Some of this pays farmers to do what they would do more cheaply without a subsidy, but a larger portion goes to criminal operators.

John Gummer, subsidy minister, boasts that Britons "remain in the forefront of the fight against fraud in the European Community. We have adopted a 45 point anti-fraud programme."

The promise to act against criminal agriculture is a constant threnody of MAFF. Thank heavens it never really does anything about it in fact.

FARMERS are not the only ones exasperated by perverse policies for the land. Britain's foxes are leaving the countryside for the town. The pickings are easier and there are fewer hunts tallyho-ing through the back gardens of suburbia. MAFF calculates that some cities have 8.5 foxes per square mile — well above most country habitats.

THE Fruit Importer's Association has been complimented on its Christianity, wisdom and balanced practicality by John Gummer. When a politician praises you, you ought to know you are conniving at some conspiracy against the public interest. The fruit trade is buckling down to accommodating the new banana regime agreed by the European Commission to celebrate the end of 1992. In future, we will all be stopped from buying anything more than token amounts of cheaper, bigger bananas and restrict our market to the West Indian crop. If the consumers are getting screwed so neatly, someone somewhere is in for a knighthood.

"AS I INDICATED on my appointment, this is a consumers' ministry. I announce the restructuring of our organisation to make it more effective in meeting the requirements of customers."

— The Rt Hon J Selwyn Gummer, minister for agriculture, 1992

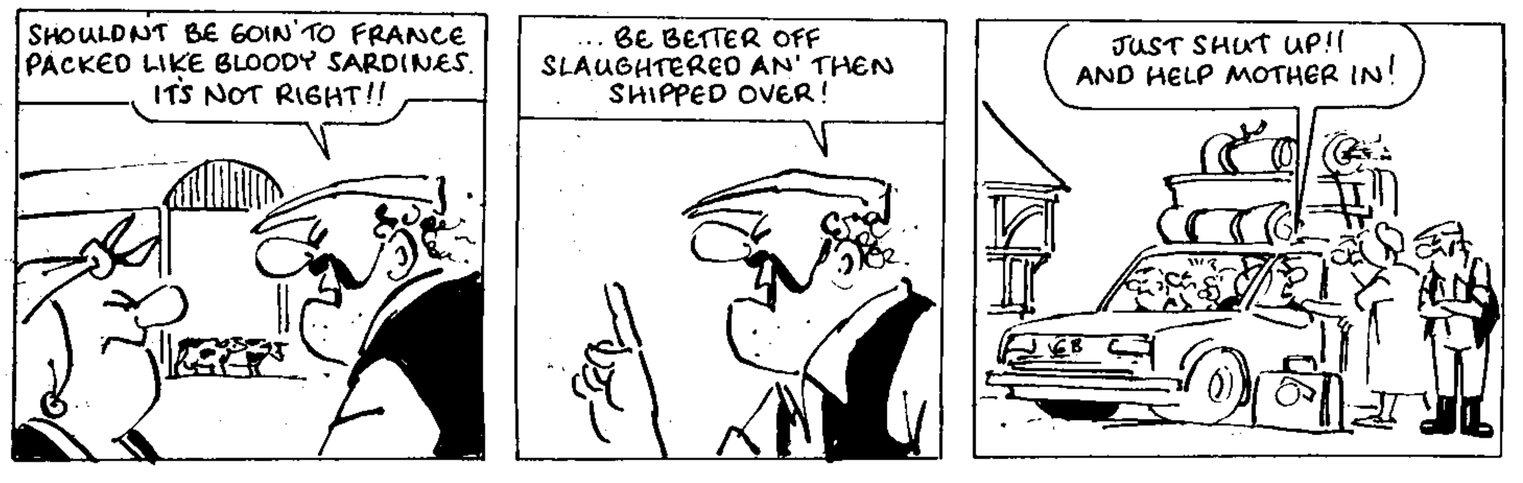
— The Rt Hon Michael Jopling, minister for agriculture, 1987

— The Rt Hon Joseph Godber, minister for agriculture, 1971

Are *all* their speeches written by computer?

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


SHOULDNT BE GOIN'TO FRANCE PACKED LIKE BLOODY SARDINES. IT'S NOT RIGHT!!
... BE BETTER OFF SLAUGHTERED AN' THEN SHIPPED OVER!
JUST SHUT UP!! AND HELP MOTHER IN!

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

REPORTS of the festering intrigue within the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (see *Eye* 795) have now been confirmed by Brian Leveson QC. No one involved in the shoddy saga of boardroom backstabbing emerges with much credit in his special report, which castigates the RLP "society" for being "out of control" and in a state of "near anarchy".

If the Phil board implements Leveson's proposals, its days as a private gentlemen's club will be over.

Chairman and leading freebooter John Last, the would-be cultural czar, is all but told to abdicate. The main event that precipitated his downfall was an assassins' assembly at the Adelphi Hotel in May, designed to overthrow sexagenarian chief executive Bob "Creaky" Creech. Like a third world coup plot, it was held when Creech was out of the country. At the meeting, a document entitled *Nuggets* was presented, full of comments slagging off the hapless Canadian.

"It was wholly inappropriate," Leveson says, "for the chairman and deputy [Last and Andrew Thompson] to allow themselves to be placed in a position of meeting disaffected staff in the circumstances which obtained. Both must bear responsibility for it."

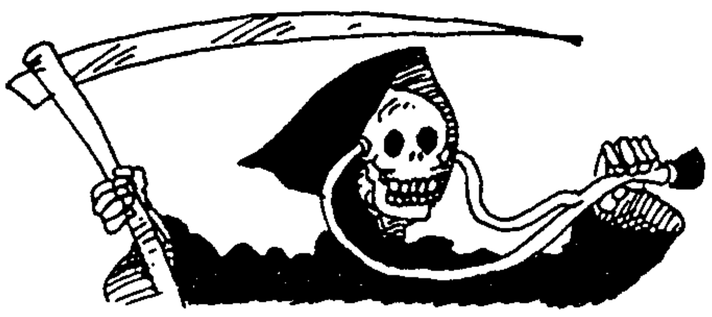
Last was responsible for appointing Creech in the first place, which Leveson describes as a "failure to recruit... a man who commands universal respect". Many Phil devotees have asked why it was necessary to import a 63-year-old Canadian with no British orchestral experience to one of the highest paid arts jobs in Britain. The report describes the appointment as "obscure", as indeed Creech is; and says it seems to have been made by only one or two members of the search committee after a nine-month exhaustive international "search".

Although Last and Thompson are almost certain to go, Creaky is to be given a chance to prove himself and will remain on probation. He has escaped being the fall guy for Last's inept management style, but the main reason for not sacking him seems to be the fear that he might sue the society!

Creech comes in for considerable stick in the Leveson report. "Nuggets" in it point to his poor interpersonal skills; uncommunicativeness; inability to deal with conflict; siding with the rank and file against principals and section leaders; lack of understanding of the orchestra's needs; serious lack of managerial skills; and very poor command of important financial matters. He is also warned that he is in material breach of sections 1, 5, 6, 9 and 10 of his contract.

With such a testimonial, Creech is clearly worth every penny of his £72,000 salary.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE LACK of retraining and updating of senior consultants is causing particular problems in ophthalmology.

Patients undergoing eye surgery at **Leicester Royal Infirmary** have an unusually high rate of post-operative astigmatism and some require more powerful glasses than the ones they wore *before* the operation. Now LRI is contemplating buying an Excimer laser to correct such cock-ups.

In **Bolton** and **Blackpool**, some senior ophthalmic surgeons are unable to perform lens implants after cataract extraction, and in **Coventry** one ophthalmologist has such poor vision in one eye that he can't use a microscope for surgery. His results are poor and many of his patients suffer severe post-operative vomiting.

● DUNCAN NICHOL, tightlipped chief of the **NHS management executive**, has forged a special relationship with an "estates professional" at **South East Thames regional health authority** headquarters. When the woman in question's job came under threat as staff were cut from 350 to 150, she produced a signed letter from Nichol stating that her job was not to be reorganised. This extraordinary use of power has yet to be explained.

The impecuniosity of the RHA is due at least in part to the enormous salary of Gerry Green, the highest paid regional general manager in the country. Not content with a Whitley council graded post, Mr Green created the post of health care assistant for himself with an equally creative salary to match.

● IN **LONDON**, the Institute of Urology is not enjoying a happy transfer from **St Peter's Hospital, Covent Garden** to the **Middlesex Hospital** (deficit £19 million and rising). Time available for clinical research no longer exists and the institute may well sink with the Middlesex ship. Nearby **Central Middlesex Hospital** is testing the water by advertising for several consultant urologists.

Bloomsbury and Islington health authority is closing 125 beds, with compulsory redundancies for trained nurses (including ward sisters). **North East Thames regional health authority** is trying to cushion the blow by paying Coutts Career Consultants a mere £100,000 to help those affected "feel positive about their future". The nurses would feel more positive if the money were used to keep them in employment for another year, but Sue Wakefield, unit general manager of Middlesex hospital, insists it can only be used for counselling.

The flagship **Guy's NHS Trust** is going cap in hand to local businesses to combat under-funding of the **Evelina children's unit**. "Help the Big Guys help the little guys" is the slogan, and although no donation is too small, potential benefactors are reminded that "many 'notes' would help many little guys" (including the administrator who skipped town with Evelina charity money seven years ago).

● MRS JOAN LEWIS, director of corporate affairs at the **Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust** has circulated an incomprehensible memo to staff outlining the hospital's savings (ie redundancy) programme. "The firm intention is to minimise job losses by using vacant posts and natural wastage and where this is not possible to ensure that changes are used for those affected for the positive opportunities they offer." Industrial relations are understandably strained.

● IN **DUNDEE** the private English firm Gardner Marchant Ltd has won a £6 million three-year catering contract with **Tayside Health Board** by providing meals at the city's three major hospitals for just £1.21 per patient per day. By comparison, the Scottish prison service budgets on £1.26 per day and a school meal in Tayside is worth £1.45. Meanwhile, 150 porters, domestics and ancillaries at Dundee's **Ninewells Hospital** have been promised dismissal if they take part in a one-day strike over conditions and pay.

● JACKIE "J.C." Clarke, 27-year-old whizzkid manager of Gloucestershire's opting-out community health unit, recently spent four days on an expenses paid fact finding mission to the United States with six senior managers. The trip, apparently to discover how a caring society looks after its elderly, was kept secret from other staff. J.C.'s robust management style has earned her a stiff reprimand from the regional health authority, and her director of personnel has since fled to the calmer waters of the acute unit.

● **BROMLEY health authority** is unable to fund its proposed new hospital on Bromley Common. The green-belt project, which includes a lake ("to act as a haven for wildlife") and trees to screen the three-storey building, is too expensive. The health authority, now in its third unrealistic bid for trust application, has cut occupational therapy services by £10,000 and some student nurses are not being offered jobs. Bromley hospital's accident centre was recently closed for 11 hours because there was no doctor, but money has been found to buy a personalised flag for the hospital and a fashion show is planned to launch the "concept designs" for new staff uniforms.

● THE REVELATION that employees at **Kingston Hospital NHS trust** received a post-election bonus (*Eye* 801) was misleading. The pay-out occurred on the morning of the election and the trust status of Norman Lamont's constituency hospital was duly preserved. Kingston's managerial supremo, John Langhan, awarded himself a £5,000 bonus and there has been a proliferation of BMWs in the managers' car park. Will Langhan's numerous meetings with "Storming Norman" insure the hospital follows the country to financial ruin? Watch this space.

M.D.

POLICE 5

SOUTH WALES police continue to harass "Cardiff Three" campaigner Malik Abdullahi, whose brother Yusef is one of three men believed to have been wrongfully convicted of the murder of prostitute Lynette White.

In *Eye* 797 we reported the long and troubled relationship between Malik and a particular detective constable. And Dai Knacker obviously believes in keeping things in the family, for a WPC sister of this same Det. Con. accompanied four other officers who called at the Abdullahi family home in Butetown, Cardiff, at 3am one night last week.

Despite no warrant, the plods insisted on searching the premises, and — doubtless outraged at not finding anything even remotely incriminating — immediately arrested Malik. He was held until 10pm the following night "on suspicion of robbery"; but when the Boyos in Blue finally got round to the interview, it was clear they had no evidence to connect him to the alleged crime and he was released without charge.

It will be interesting to see if any mention of this fiasco is made at Malik's trial next week. He faces public order charges arising from an alleged attack on *five* plods, including the said WPC's brother.

PUBLIC relations skills are sadly lacking among the plods on the streets of Greater Manchester, as the following cautionary tale shows.

Knacker's finest arranged a "police awareness day" for black teenagers in the inner-city Moss Side area, the idea being to persuade more black people to become freemasons (*Surely "to join Her Majesty's Constabulary" ? Ed.*) The idea was backed by the Moss Side and Hulme Community Development Trust, an influential economic regeneration organisation set up as a partnership between the local authority, the community and the private sector.

A well-known trust worker, the church-going John Samuels, took some leaflets and posters advertising the awareness day to the Moss Side district shopping centre. But he did so at the very moment the plods had chosen to stage a drugs raid on a local betting shop. Mr Samuels was thus in the wrong place at the wrong time — and wearing the wrong colour skin. He was promptly assaulted, arrested and strip searched before being released without charge or apology.

Sensibly, the trust immediately cancelled the awareness day.

RON HADFIELD, the saintly chief constable of the UK's most progressive police force, the West Midlands, has bared his fangs in a rare display of public anger.

The object of his ire was Chris Mullin, the Birmingham Six champion and Labour MP for Sunderland South, who has called for another constabulary to investigate who was really responsible for the Birmingham pub bombings (the West Midlands apron-throwers' latest effort to try to reconvict the Six has spectacularly backfired).

Hadfield is under a lot of pressure from councillors outside Birmingham to break up his constabulary (speciality: confessions made up while-u-wait) and return to the pre-1974 structure whereby cities and counties run their own forces.

Current home office thinking is to reduce the nation's plods into perhaps a dozen regional forces, but Hadfield is opposed to seeing his mega empire subsumed by the yokel county forces which surround it.

ARMS NEWS

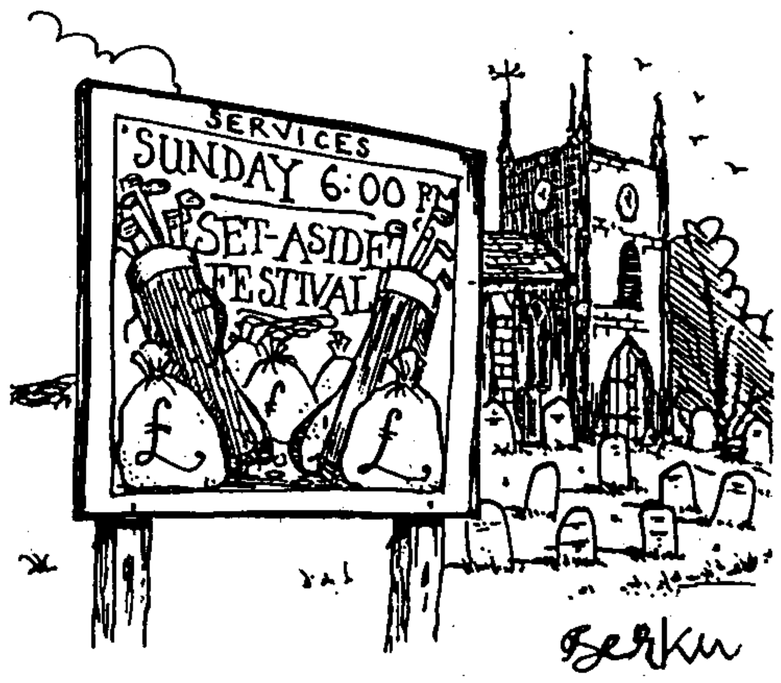
ALAN MAIN must be the world's worst arms dealer — he has just lost two shipments destined for Croatia.

Nottinghamshire-based Main, who previously traded as Creative Resources, is no stranger to *Eye* readers. Four years ago he used bogus Nigerian end-user certificates to smuggle arms to South Africa. Now he is up to his old tricks again in Croatia with the same astounding degree of incompetence.

The plan was engagingly simple: Main arranged to buy the weapons, paid for by the Croats, from a Serbian base at Bar in Montenegro. These would then be shipped up the coast and unloaded at Split. The first consignment was seized by the Yugoslavian army when Main, using a bogus Sri Lankan end-user certificate, forgot to tell his captain that he was actually to appear to be heading for Sri Lanka. The consequence was that Serb authorities got wind of it and the shipment was seized, costing the Croats £6 million.

Scheme two was a repeat of the first, this time with a forged end-user certificate from India. Main got into dispute with his Windsor-based shipper over a freight bill for some £330,000. The ship was turned around at sea and sent back to Bar. This time officials checked the certificate properly and found that the Indian general who was supposed to have signed it did not exist. The arms were seized and the cost to the Croats was around £4 million.

Main has taken his commissions, but there are one or two Croats who are making unpleasant noises and want their money back. Another interesting fact is that Main is well known to customs and the ministry of defence. If Douglas Hurd really wants a full arms embargo, he should talk to colleagues who oversee arms-related deals and who would have been able to stop Main and seize the cash — all the banking was done in London and the Isle of Man.



ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BENT

OFFICIAL housing policy in barmy Bent is that the homeless — if they are lucky — get only *one* offer of a home from town hall officials, and they can like it or lump it.

So it is surprising when the council decides to rehouse someone who has previously incurred the wrath of officials by turning down an offer — except, of course, when the lucky new householder is Tory independent councillor Judith Harper.

She is one of a handful of ex-Labour members who keep the Tories in power by a slender majority. Funnily enough, she left Labour (under whose banner she was elected to Bent) last year after complaining that her colleagues were not showing enough support for her housing problems.

Although she stipulated she would not be joining the Tories, a week later the official Tory group promised an inquiry into her housing case. Harper has since consistently voted with the Tories, who have now secured her a des. res. in Colindale through the Notting Hill Housing Trust.

Meanwhile the bizarre African Nationalist-Independent Conservative bloc which has held the balance of power in the borough for 18 months has a surprising new recruit — Asian councillor Manibhai Patel, who has switched from Labour after a dispute over Kashmir. Patel seems unperturbed that he is now allied with the independents, including the notorious Poline Nyaga (*Eyes passim*). Perhaps someone should tell him that Nyaga's most recent political statement urged the council to stop funding Asian groups and give the money to Africans instead.

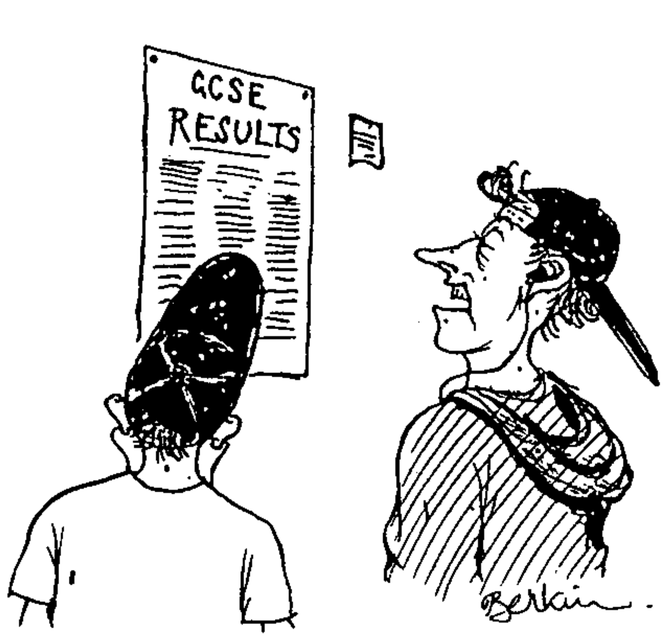
MANCHESTER

A CURIOUS move by the reformed Stalinists who run Manchester city council has let in the atrociously boring Arthur Sandford as chief executive of Britain's most powerful provincial authority.

The job was meant to go to assistant town clerk Howard Bernstein, the man responsible for Manchester's rebirth (British Olympic nomination, 1994 City of Drama etc), but somehow Sandford, former town clerk and Nottinghamshire county council boss and not even a Marxist, won approval.

A similar thing happened a few years ago when he accidentally became chief executive of the Football League. A new chairman, the late Bill Fox, had been appointed on the proviso that radical players' union boss Gordon Taylor would soon join him as Football League supremo. But the league's power-brokers got cold feet and conspired to obstruct Taylor's accession. A void had to be filled, preferably by a nobody who wouldn't rock the boat. Sandford, unknown outside local government, got the job.

His two-year tenure coincided with the biggest crisis in the league's 100-year history: its top 22 clubs defected to the Football Association and set up the rival Premier League. Throughout this time Sandford did nothing, said nothing and provided no vestige of leadership. He then quietly slipped away to obscurity, from whence he has been plucked by Manchester councillors and offered the city's key £80,000-a-year top job. Perhaps Manchester is preparing to hive off large tracts of the city to Salford or Bolton...



"Huh! I only got three... er, what's the first letter of the alphabet again?"

MURKEYSIDE

FIGURES published by the local government ombudsperson show a staggering 160 percent increase in maladministration complaints levelled against Liverpool city council.

For the second year running the council has been criticised for failing to correct highlighted abuses.

On the financial front, resources director Phil Kelly has announced a £13 million overspend on the council budget less than halfway through the financial year. This is despite all the sackings, some of which are being defended at public cost at industrial tribunals.

City poll taxpayers (£400 a year) want an explanation, particularly from £80,000-a-year chief executive Peter Bounds, who has recently "reorganised" his senior management. Only in Liverpool could he get away with claiming that a council with 22 departments, 35 chief officers and eight directors represented "streamlining".

In an effort to cut overpriced managers, Liberal Democrat councillor Roger Johnson called for a vote of no confidence in Bounds at council committee. On hearing this, Bounds threatened to sue the council on grounds of "constructive dismissal". The ever wimpish Lib Dem leader, Mike Storey, ordered his troops to vote against the motion, much to Johnson's chagrin.

SHEFFIELD

AFTER losing more than £20 million on the World Student Games, Sheffield council is removing funding from all services it isn't legally obliged to support. Nevertheless the junkets continue — and the council is still pouring money into sites like the Ponds Forge swimming centre, which attracts even fewer punters than the council's own "worst-case scenario" predictions.

The recent Sheffield Festival cost £60,000 after town hall promises that a £30,000 kick-start was the absolute limit. Happily the council displayed rare financial acumen and set up a trust to run the festival and indemnify council leaders against personal loss.

Locals are now bracing themselves for next year when Sheffield celebrates one hundred years as a city. No expense will be spared, but who will come to the party?

Channel 5 Television, until recently a certainty to move to the city, according to council leaders, is now looking elsewhere after the games fiasco. And the city's new NFT-style media centre is still-born, despite a grant of several million pounds from the department of the environment to fix the roof on the specious grounds that it would be needed for the wretched student games. Although the roof was mended the building is derelict, after a lavish launch in 1988 and the ubiquitous feasibility studies. Unfortunately the council had already closed the perfectly viable Anvil Cinema, so film buffs must now travel to Bradford to escape *Batman* and *Lethal Weapon 3*.

TUC NEWS

GEORGE Brumwell, new general secretary of the building union UCATT, told the *Financial Times* he was "happy" that John Hand QC's report had finally been published exposing corruption and ballot-rigging in the union over donkey's years.

Er... not quite true. Hand's report was in the possession of the UCATT executive last February. Brumwell and his men decided to withhold publication until general secretary Albert Williams had retired that month. And it was further suppressed because of the pending general election (publicity might have embarrassed Labour).

Now it has finally leaked, Brumwell will have to clear up a mess which will see UCATT plunge another £2 million into the red on top of last year's £1.5 million deficit. And the union's grassroots members will no longer be able to hold branch elections under the guise of £2-a-night "star nights", including strippers, where elections were often rigged.

'Blackleg'

Letters

Private Eye

Quote unquote

Sir,

You "quote" me as saying "I'd sooner forgo my knighthood than work with that woman any longer" as part of your (extraordinary) campaign vilifying Catherine Hawkins, the general manager of South Western Regional Health Authority, who is retiring after long and distinguished NHS service. Your "quote" has the validity of "my knighthood".

Let me rephrase your "quote". "I think I would rather work with Catherine Hawkins again than be honoured with a knighthood".

Yours faithfully,
(MR) CHARLES STUART,
(lately chairman, SWRHA),

Tiverton, Devon.

Marriage lines

Sir,

Just a couple of corrections to the article on my daughter's wedding:

a) I have not lost £10,000.

b) I did not hire a top rave band from the United States.

c) Kiershan does not work on Bizarre.

d) Jason does not work for The Sun.

e) I did not return from holiday in a foul mood. I always look like that!

Apart from that, the four paragraph article was correct in every way.

Yours faithfully,
KELVIN MACKENZIE,

The Sun.

Lookalike

Lamont

Hindley

Sir,

The lacklustre hair, the eyes — mad, cold and staring, the realisation that the public will never forgive you for what you've done... I wonder if Myra Hindley and Norman Lamont could be related? Then again, she took her orders from a certified lunatic who lived nearby and showed a complete disregard for the suffering of others while pursuing his sordid crimes. Norman just lives next door to the Prime Minister.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY PUMBRIDGE,

Kingston, Surrey.

Letters out

Sir,

Why is it that nowadays your Letters section is dominated with replies from some of the obnoxious individuals you frequently write about? Why don't you have a separate, "Obnoxious Pricks" right-to-reply section and keep the letters column for what it's supposed to be for: ie correspondence from decent, civilised, middle-class brown nosers like me?

Yours faithfully,
F.S. RICHARDSON,

Barnoldswick, Lancs.

TV times

Sir,

It was gratifying to be mentioned again in your illustrious columns; yet I cannot imagine how you naughty boys could possibly know that Cllr. Peter Golds of Bent, when Hampstead Conservative Party agent, dipped into the wardrobe I keep for my alter ego — Lady Maud Pendragon.

I have no desire to resurrect past battles fought on Hampstead Heath, but methinks Mr Golds, in his letter to your last issue, protests a little too much ("...wearing dresses — never!"). Never, Mr Golds? No, as he says, dresses do not suit his figure and I can confirm that he did not look attractive in the evening dress, nylons and court shoes which Lady Pendragon reluctantly allowed him to borrow for what, I recall him telling me, was to be a "ladies" evening. Or perhaps it was just one of their concert nights. Cllr. Golds' ghastly green wig, I am particularly anxious for your readers to know, was NOT *one of mine. He returned the items of clothing before one of the evening performances of my three-act comedy* THE SIEGE OF BOGTOWN *in 1985 and I assure you there were witnesses to this.*

May I bring my recent novel THE PENDRAGON LEGACY *(Excalibur Press of London: £8.95) to the attention of those interested in the further adventures of the Spanking Countess? A most suitable book, I venture to suggest, for the libraries of the Borough of Bent.*

Finally, may I invite all your unruly young male readers to look me up in the telephone directory, give me a tinkle and then pop along for tea and tuition?

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY EARL-WILLIAMS,

London NW3.

Screw loose

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the striking similarity between the SUN*'s cover of 17 September (picture of Norma Lamont with caption "Now we've ALL been screwed by the Cabinet") and the cartoon on page 5 of* EYE *801 (picture of Norma Lamont with caption "I'm screwing everyone").*

Are they by any chance related? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
TIM BENBOW,

St Antony's College, Oxford.

Smut glut

Sir,

Maybe I've missed the point — or is it some silly private joke? — but who really gives a damn about a six-year-old tape transcript of a conversation between some barrister and his kid's nanny (Grovel, EYE *802)?*

It reads like something Dempster or Satchell would turn down, but only because it was too smutty. Has the EYE *sunk to the level of the naff press it presides over and satirizes? It would appear so.*

Yours rather pissed off,
NICK FOREMAN,

Beckingham, Doncaster.

Track record

Sir,

I don't think I could find a paragraph of your letter (sic) that was accurate.

Virgin has still not decided whether to buy or lease trains. No train is being taken out of the Great Western Group — Paddington to Bristol, Penzance and Swansea — to be given to Virgin Rail. Furthermore, we have not even discussed our policy on crews working conditions let alone made any decisions.

Kind regards,
WILL WHITEHORN,

Corporate Affairs Director, Chairman, Virgin Group of Companies.

Justice for bananas

Sir,

Old Muckspreader is right to criticise the lunacies of EEC policy most of the time, especially as CAP policies have done so much to harm the countries we have kept underdeveloped in order to supply us with cheap food and former trading partners like New Zealand. For once the EEC is actually doing something to support the economy of islands which we encouraged to become totally dependent on their banana crop, rather than Latin American countries which use cheap and exploited labour to flood the market with cheap fruit. It's about time the EEC thought of its Christian duty for once!

Yours sincerely,
CATHERINE LAMB,

Chipping Norton, Oxon.

Lookalike

A.N. Wilson

F. Pitt-Kethley

Sir,

Has anyone noticed the remarkable resemblance between that literary eccentric, A.N. Wilson, and that other literary eccentric, Fiona Pitt-Kethley? Are they, in any way, related? Are they, indeed, possibly even the same person? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
ERIC DODDS,

Swanley, Kent.

Diabolical liberties

Sir,

I hope your readers apply in droves for copies of the SAFF pamphlet which alleges 49 "historical inaccuracies" in my book CHILDREN FOR THE DEVIL. *They will receive a delightful combination of garbled psychobabble and paranoid fantasy.*

They might want to bear in mind the following, however: The Sub-Culture Alternative Freedom Foundation (also known as The Sorcerers Apprentice Fighting Fund) is run by one Christopher Bray, (prop: The Sorcerer's Apprentice, purveyor or smells and spells to the occult world) publisher of an interesting occult magazine — THE LAMP OF THOTH.

One issue alone of this publication carried lengthy promotional articles and contact addresses for two satanic "churches" — The Temple of Set and The Process. The US leader of the former has been adjudged by his employers (the US Army) as the perpetrator of a documented case of ritual abuse. The latter is a group of avowedly satanic psychopaths which believes in murder as a way of bringing about the day of judgement — and said so in its article.

Far from being, as SAFF alleges, "a satan hunter" I couldn't give a toss about anyone's spiritual belief system — provided it doesn't involve generally unsociable acts such as child abuse and homicide. Which is why my book suggested it was not a terribly good idea for Mr Bray to encourage his readers to get in touch with The Temple of Set or The Process.

Sadly, he/SAFF felt this was amounted to an attack on the right of all manner of pagans to practise their religions. Utter nonsense, of course, but then the very same Mr Bray describes himself as "A Cosmic Spiritual Warrior... in touch with realities beyond any paradigm I [as a mere journalist] — could think up". Enough said?

Yours faithfully,
TIM TATE,

Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Bar none

Sir,

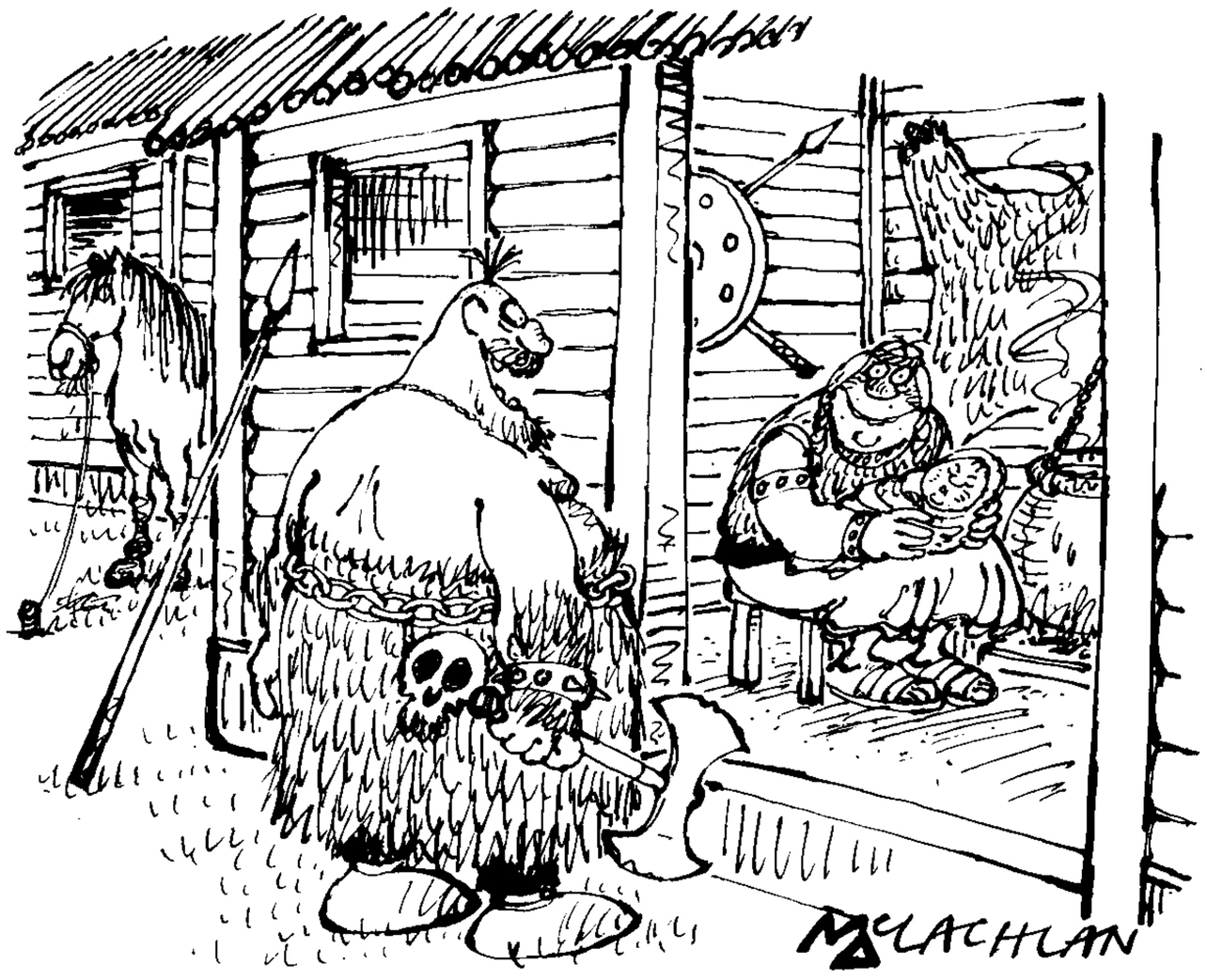
*Piloti's lack of background detail regarding the demise of the Tallow Tub in Salford (*EYE *801) may have (deliberately?) misled readers.*

Chapel Street, Salford, has an over-abundance of pubs. The area adjacent, Greengate, has diminishing numbers of residents; there have been pub casualties already and clearly there will be more closures.

The campaign by CAMRA and the Victorian Society to prevent demolition was worthless without generating regular bums on barstools. Customers were near extinction at the "Tub" long before the fire and there is no commercial justification for keeping this corpse alive.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN GREENWAY,

Prestwick, Manchester.



"Hi, Hun, I'm home!"

I-SPY

Oxford

Submitted by E.P. Wilson. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Tho but

Sir,

This "Liz" is a canny strip, like, but the captions is a bliddy disgrace, the knaas. Wot ye need, bonny lad, is a reet mazer of a bilingual sub-editor for ta purrit reet.

Haway man, nee Geordie taaks like that, looka — wrang tenses stottin' aal owwer the place and clagged up wi' clarty Scottish and Yorkshire vowel sounds and idiom (by, that's a clivvor word, eh?).

"Britain's top comics" divvent look ti me like they wad knaa pitmatic dialect if yiz dunshed them in the gob wirrit.

Gan canny,
FRANK PETERS,

Cornwall.

Middle man

Sir,

As a concerned Midlander I have watched the growing hatred emerge in the argument between the southern, lager-drinking, selfish Porsche driving scum who now live in worthless chicken coops and those stupid, tight, beer-swilling overweight northern folk who work down mines and travel to work on trams, with growing anguish.

I thought your rag would keep such bigoted trash out of the letters page. As it has not, I shall be continuing my subscription.

Yours faithfully,
D. JOHNSON,

Cradley Heath, West Midlands.

Silly mid-on

Sir,

Just Fancy That — 802

It is a blow when not even yourselves can recognise a whiff of sarcasm when it is presented to you.

My self esteem has been shot to pieces.

Yours sincerely,
MIKE SELVEY,

Cricket Correspondent, The Guardian.

A Pratt in the dark

Sir,

I wish your magazine would stop having a go at C4's A STAB IN THE DARK. *I rather liked it.*

Yours honestly,
KATHERINE PRATT,

Northumberland.

PS: Is Square Eyes too fogeyish to appreciate the satire? I think we should be told.

Col LITERALLY balls

£10 paid for contributions

"Literally, Sir George, a yes or no answer — is this a long-term or a short-term measure?"
VALERIE SINGLETON, Radio 4
(Jenny Billingsley)

"The orchestra has left the platform, literally as one man."
CHRIS DE SOUSA, Radio 3
(Ian Harris)

"... and I went back to the Isle of Man quite literally with my tail between my legs."
J.P. DONLEAVY, LBC
(Martin Kelner)

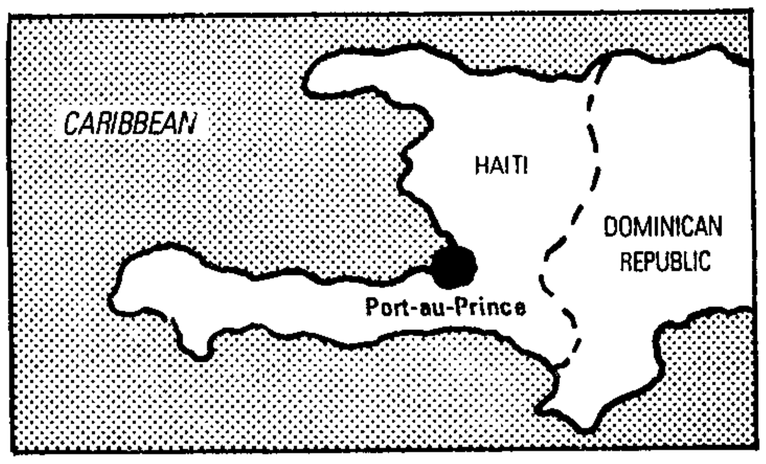
"They've got million-year-old-eggs here [in Hong Kong]. And that's literally what they are."
SIMON BATES, Radio 1
(Richard Audreson)

"Wimbledon, caught with their knickers down in the first minute, literally."
BOBBY MOORE, Capital Gold
(Ruth Cottingham)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from **Port-au-Prince**



From Our Own Correspondent

WHEN is a head of state not a head of state? When he has been elected by a landslide on a left-of-centre platform, recognised by every UN member and then overthrown by a bloodthirsty military that breaks every human rights abuse record. ***Bienvenue à Haiti,*** **as one airport sign — formerly adorned with Papa Doc's mutilated corpses — proclaims.**

It is now a year since Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a diminutive radical priest elected with 67 percent of the vote, escaped with his life on a night flight to exile. Under war hero George Bush's "new world order", restoring democracy in Haiti looked a doddle. Only 150 "proper" troops would be needed, a French embassy military report concluded. The Americans thought it could be done with half that. After all, the closest Papa Doc came to being overthrown was an invasion by four American mercenaries.

In the interests of peace and justice, of course, military force has been ruled out by the Organisation of American States, to whom management of the crisis has been contracted out. Never mind that an estimated 3,000 Haitians have been tortured, garrotted or shot by our dictatorship. Or that the political officer at the US embassy can slide further into his armchair and declare contentedly: "Everything seems to be moving towards civil war."

It wouldn't have been so bad if the public relations effort to persuade the world that America was serious about defending the result of an election it endorsed had been half competent. The key was that old chestnut, sanctions. As someone once said: "Sanctions never work" — particularly if you make sure they don't.

Somehow, US coastguard radar just couldn't pick up any of those several thousand-tonne tankers and freighters that slip into Port-au-Prince every week. Strangely, leaky fishing boats laden with refugees sailing in the opposite direction were no problem: indeed, George Bush was so concerned about a tidal wave of black refugees hitting swing-state Florida in an election year that he overruled the supreme court and issued an executive order for compulsory repatriation without screening. He is the first US president to allow repatriation of refugees to a country governed by a regime Washington claims not to recognise.

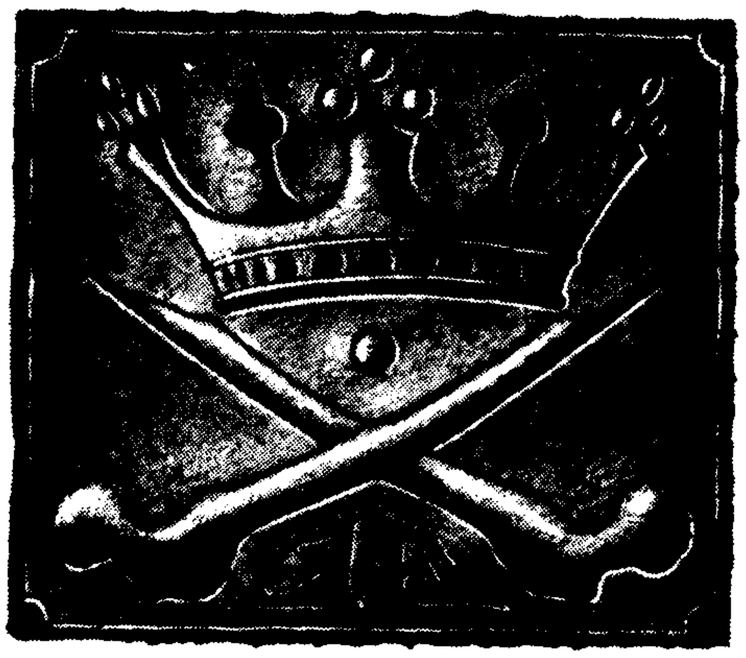
And there's the rub. Our military may be brutes, but they aren't stupid: US training has taught them that if you want to put Washington on the spot, find a puppet prime minister or president it has backed in the past. Enter Marc Bazin, PM. Conservative, fluent in English and the eternal "American candidate" in a series of elections, he managed just 13 percent of the vote in December 1990 — less than one fifth of Aristide's haul. Ballots are paper, bullets are metal, as they say in Creole.

Those fearing a German take-over of British foreign as well as economic policy, will be reassured to know that Britain has been playing its customary role of first lieutenant to Bush's commander-in-chief. Research by Ted Kennedy's office showed Britain to be among the most assiduous sanctions busters, with seven ships leaving Liverpool for Port-au-Prince in a three-month period earlier this year. Having pioneered compulsory repatriation of boat people from Hong Kong, Britain has even chipped in with a couple of return shipments of Haitians who made it to the British-ruled Turks and Caicos Islands.

Just to make the Foreign Office's position clear, ministers and civil servants decided that Aristide would not be afforded any of the trappings associated with a head of state when he visited Britain last month. Asked for diplomatic protection, the Foreign Office decided there was "no significant security threat" to a man who has lost count of the number of assassination attempts he has survived.

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE



Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

DURING the interview, Mrs Janet Rider, the mayor of Shaftesbury, said: "We are building a new altar in the ruins of our Abbey and it would be an asset if we could have a bit of King Edward the Martyr's (murdered, 978) remains to inter nearby. We would like a decent-sized piece of him, a femur, say, but we would accept something smaller. At present his remains are in the care of the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood. Their Father Alexi says that he might donate a bone, provided we treat it with reverence. However, I am reliably informed that the poor man's remains are kept in shoe-boxes in a bank."

AFTER an investigation by the elders of the Rongai District, Kenya, Councillor William Lasoi and Edward Siggei announced that in the interests of tribal peace no local husband would be allowed to beat his wife after dark.

"The wives are in the habit of wailing. The neighbours reach the conclusion that this is an ethnic rather than a family matter. Then they attack. In future, any husband found beating his wife between dusk and dawn will be heavily fined."

IN A statement read by the Rev. David Smith, Mr William Woodhead announced his resignation as mayor of Stockton after only five days in office as he had been charged with assaulting his mayoress wife, Doreen, during their installation ceremony. "It was a tiring day, and I am afraid things got a little out of hand," said Reverend Smith.

"I AM afraid we have had to withdraw Bernd's boxing licence," said Kurt Hallbach, president of the Boxing Federation. "He has been knocked out in 15 of his last 20 fights, and the other five fights were stopped by referees who feared for his survival."

His trainer, Manfred Jassmann, said: "Bernd is the least talented boxer in the world. He has bought himself laurel-crowns and trophies. He shops in a shiny dressing gown."

Speaking for her son, Mrs Bernd Kulle said: "Bernd is suing the Federation for the return of his licence. Boxing is what he does best."

SPEAKING in their defence, Mr Sagmi Zaki told the Nagoya Central Court: "Mr and Mrs Tancha are both over 80 and come from a traditional Okinwa background. They expect their grandchildren to pay them regular visits. When they found that their own grandchildren did not want to pay them visits, they hired three Rent-Grandchildren from a Tokyo acting agency that specialises in providing imaginary families for the old. But when the actors playing the grandchildren arrived, Mr and Mrs Tancha began to abuse and beat them for their disgraceful behaviour, and the police were called."

INFORMATION: Shrewsbury Evening Echo 4.4.92; Daily Nation 21.3.92; Middlesbrough Herald & Post 29.4.92; Hamburger Morgenpost 15.4.92; Toronto Globe & Mail 2.4.92. MONITORS: Nigel Scott, Mrs M. Marangos-Gilks, Nick Grenfell, H. Gode, Brendan J. O'Byrne.

No Apology

From Mr John Major and others

In recent weeks, my government may have given the impression that we believed that the Maastricht Treaty was a flawless and inspired document which deserved the unquestioning support of the British people.

We now recognise that such statements may have been misleading. We are happy to acknowledge that the treaty is in many ways faulty and in need of urgent revision.

We do not apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused the public and would like to take this opportunity to pretend that we knew what we were doing all along.

As a token of our good faith, no one is going to resign.

©J. Major and others

ON OTHER PAGES

Smith Lashes No One ——— p.3

A Doctor writes

AS a doctor I am often asked "Doctor, should Ludovic Kennedy be put to sleep?" The simple answer is yes.

What happens is that a number of people feel increasing pain at the sight of this elderly broadcaster endlessly repeating his arguments about euthanasia or, to give it the full medical name, *Ludovica arenchasicofimensis*.

Often, after exposure to Ludovic Kennedy, the patient falls asleep into a state of terminal boredom from which there is no recovery.

If you are worried about Ludovic Kennedy, you should avoid all contact with newspapers and television.

©A. Doctor

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Am I David Mellor

YES/NO

✽ *You and your family can then experience sun, sea, sangria but not sex in the Eldorado-style paradise of Villa Arafata.*

✽ *Everything inclusive – flight, accommodation, ice-cream etc.*

Hurry, hurry while your job lasts

French Referendum Results in full

(continued from page one)

Cyrano de Bergerac (sud)

OUI

Madame et Monsieur Franglais; Monsieur et Madame Dupont; Johnny Halliday; Monsieur Hulot; Jean de Florets; Jeanette de Winterson; Jean Wells; Monsieur Ned Shérrin et son jeune ami; Jean Paul Belmondo; Jean Claude Killy; Brigitte Bardot; Monsieur Patrick Marnham de le Londres journal *Le Vieuxie*; Jean Jacques Rousseau.

NON

Asterix; Obelix; Jean Paul Sartre; Marquis de Sade; Jean Marie Le Hitler; Jean Paul Spart; Monsieur Renée de TV's *'Allo Allo*; Les Frères Roux; les Frères Jacques; Alain Delors et son lumière; Babar L'éléphant; Lyn Barbar de New York's *Vanity Fair*; Charles Aznavour; Charles Aznavote.

CAN'T SAY

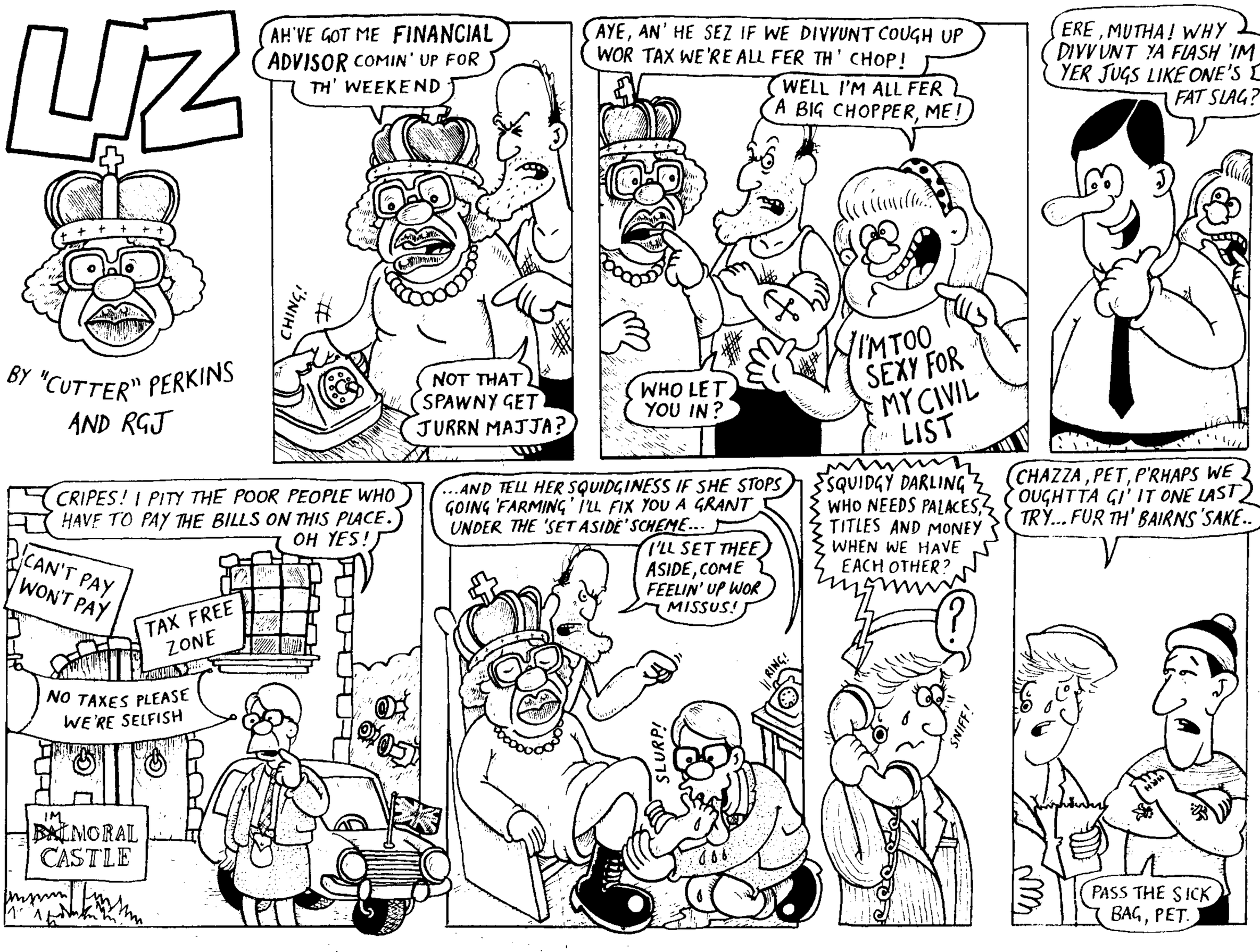
Marcel Marceau.

What the result means

by Our Political Team In London, Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, Limoges and Nevers-Sur-Dimanche.

1. Er...
2. Er...
3. C'est tout.

YES! IT'S THE OUTRAGEOUS NEW STRIP FROM BRITAIN'S TOP COMICS


UZ
BY "CUTTER" PERKINS AND RGJ
AH'VE GOT ME FINANCIAL ADVISOR COMIN' UP FOR TH' WEEKEND
CHING!
NOT THAT SPAWNY GET JURRN MAJJA?
AYE, AN' HE SEZ IF WE DIVVUNT COUGH UP WOR TAX WE'RE ALL FER TH' CHOP!
WELL I'M ALL FER A BIG CHOPPER, ME!
WHO LET YOU IN?
I'M TOO SEXY FOR MY CIVIL LIST
ERE, MUTHA! WHY DIVVUNT YA FLASH 'IM YER JUGS LIKE ONE'S FAT SLAG?
CRIPES! I PITY THE POOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO PAY THE BILLS ON THIS PLACE. OH YES!
CAN'T PAY WON'T PAY
TAX FREE ZONE
NO TAXES PLEASE WE'RE SELFISH
IM BALMORAL CASTLE
...AND TELL HER SQUIDGINESS IF SHE STOPS GOING 'FARMING' I'LL FIX YOU A GRANT UNDER THE 'SET ASIDE' SCHEME...
I'LL SET THEE ASIDE, COME FEELIN' UP WOR MISSUS!
SLURP!
RING!
SQUIDGY DARLING WHO NEEDS PALACES, TITLES AND MONEY WHEN WE HAVE EACH OTHER?
SNIFF!
CHAZZA, PET, P'RHAPS WE OUGHTTA GI' IT ONE LAST TRY... FUR TH' BAIRNS' SAKE..
PASS THE SICK BAG, PET.

LATE NEWS

LAMONT TUMBLES

THE VALUE of the Lamont fell through the floor today after heavy speculation that he is no bloody good at his job.

After initial attempts to defend the Lamont it became apparent that this was impossible, and the Lamont became the lowest-rated chancellor in Europe.

There were panic moves to offload Lamont and a general rush followed to get rid of him at any price.

Only a short time ago, the Lamont was being heralded as the proud symbol of British financial stability. Now it lies in disgrace — weak, unwanted and with silly eyebrows. *(Shurely 'little immediate hope of recovery'? Ed.)*

John Major, however, continued to attempt to talk the Lamont up.

"The Lamont has not been devalued," he said. "It is worth what it was before — very little."

Norman Lamont is 57, hold on 63, no 42, er 51, no, er...

John Cole writes

The Sterling Crisis

Hondootedly Moster Norman Lamont Head On The Block luciano pavarotti michael oondaatje burt bacharach classic fm fisher spassky Creesis Of Confidence melanoma milanovitch unforgiven clint eastwood ra-ra rasputin russia's greatest love machine budweiser Maastricht Rufurundum Quustion Mark Over Europe eldorado serenata notturna zippedy-doo-dah zippedy-ay Buckbunchers' Revolt Mooster John Meejor Wurst Day In Office carmina burana guiseppe sinopoli monopoly totopoly poly toynbee poly samson poly syllable syllabub Mossus Thotcher Proved Right All Along vikram seth also sprach zarathustra Moster Husultine's Position Unclear janine di giovanni nigella nutella fromage frais tira misu Moster John Smuth Silent Moster Paddy Ashdown No Comment casablanca casa pupo divertimenti quasimodo sine qua non troppo cosi fan tutte henry kelly pisspoor Wuther Jacques Delors haagen däzs *(continued p. 94)*

The Daily Hellograph

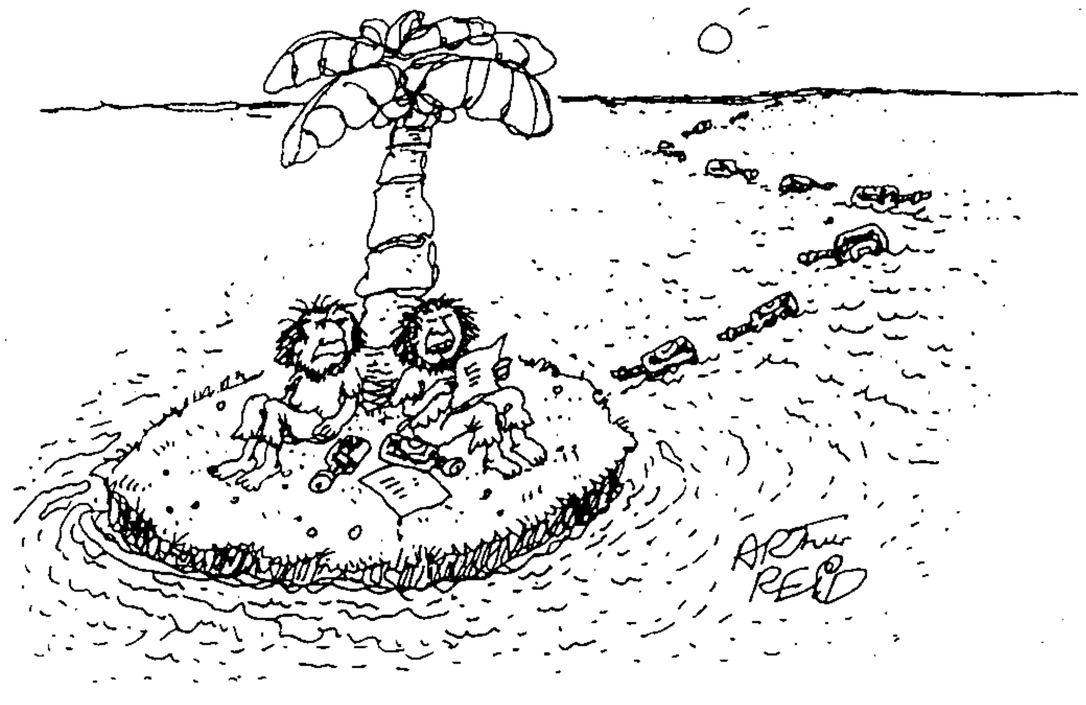
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1992

Is this the body of Hitler?

By Our Telegraph Staff Professor Hugh Trevor-Grover

ASTONISHING pictures have come to light which appear to show that the Editor of the Daily Telegraph, Herr Hitler Hastings, is not dead but merely miraculously well-preserved in his office in Canary Wharf.

If these pictures are authenticated they could give a focus to the efforts of right-wing extremists, many of whom still read the Daily Telegraph under the impression that it might contain something interesting.



"Now the interest rates have come back down again!"

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Sunday

I am getting very considerably annoyed indeed by people saying that I am going to devalue the pound. I will not be told what to do by anybody, especially by the newspapers who are being so horrid to my friend, David Mellor. These people know nothing whatever about the economy, whereas I worked in a bank for many months. Mr Hopcroft said on 29th June 1968 that I was one of the best tellers the Streatham branch had ever had, as I noted in my diary at the time. Anyway, I am certainly going to show them all up today with my big speech in Glasgow. Oh, yes. The message will be simple — there will be no devaluation of the pound so long as I am Prime Minister. When I said this to Mr Heseltine this morning, he burst out laughing with relief and looked happier than he has done for months.

Monday

My big speech was a huge success, especially the catchy "sound bite" which my friend Jeffrey Archer wrote for me. "If I stand for anything at all in politics it is that there can, in my judgement, be no question whatsoever of a devaluation in sterling." The Scottish businessmen, they were so impressed that they even forgot to clap and there was a respectful silence when I finished. When I got back to London, Norma Lamont came in from next door with a half-empty bottle of Scotch and said "Everythingsh OK, PM, theresh no need to panic, even though the pound is on the floor." To illustrate his point, he slid very slowly to the floor and did not get up for a considerable number of minutes. It was a very amusing example of Norma's well-known sense of fun.

Tuesday

I was in no small measure honoured when at 6.00 this morning I received a call from Her Majesty the Queen. She asked me to fly up to Balmoral immediately to discuss a matter of the gravest national importance. I, of course, knew what she was talking about, as, luckily, only the previous evening my wife Norman had shown me the special Royal Divorce Edition of *Hello!*. "It is all

very sad, Your Majesty," I told her in my special concerned voice, after I had been shown into the Tartan Drawing Room. "But these things happen, especially nowadays, and there's nothing one can do about it." "But that is your job, Mr Major," she said in a curiously stern voice. I admit that I was very considerably surprised to hear this and I replied as respectfully as I could: "Beg pardon, Ma'am, but I was not aware that my duties included marriage guidance counselling to your children." "What a silly little man you are," said Her Majesty in a most amusing way. "I am talking about the pound. One doesn't want one's head on something that is worth nothing at all." I was most relieved at this, because I was immediately able to reassure her that, whatever happened, there would be no devaluation so long as I was Prime Minister. "That's just what the other silly little man told me in 1967," she said. "The one with the pipe and the macintosh." She really is a most amusing lady.

Wednesday

I was considerably surprised when I went out to fetch in the milk this morning to see Mr Lamont standing on the ledge of his bedroom window at No. 11. A small crowd had gathered and were shouting: "Jump, jump!" When I called up to Norma: "What's the matter?" he shouted down: "The game's up, John. The Germans have done for us. I can't go on." Luckily, his wife appeared with a cup of tea and persuaded him to go to his office as usual. At 9.45, Mr Lamont rang up to say that he had just spent another £10 billion to support the pound. "Well done, Norma," I told him, "you are doing a very good job." "No, I am not," he said, with a sob. "The City's gone bananas. The pound is collapsing." I told him not to be so silly. We had all thought about this very carefully, and all he had to do to save the pound was to put up interest rates.

Ten minutes later Norma ran in through the door, wearing a lampshade on his head and shouted: "I've put them up 2% and no one's taking a blind bit of notice." I told him to calm down, go back to his office and put up the interest rates again. Three minutes later, Norma appeared again in my office with a piece of carpet in his mouth. "15%," he cried, "and the bastards are still selling." I had to tell him in my special stern voice that I did not expect to hear a word like that from a member of my Cabinet. "You mean 15?" he said, with froth coming out of his ears. "How would you like 30, 50, 100?" For some reason, he appeared to be under some stress, shouting "Maggie was right!" at the top of his voice. Luckily, I had a brilliant idea, of the kind that great leaders have at moments of real crisis. Slapping Norma round the face, I said "It's alright. I've got the solution. We will devalue the pound." Norma was so relieved that he passed out.

Thursday

My plan has worked brilliantly. We have left the ERM, and we

have been able to announce a huge cut in interest rates, from 15% right down to 12%. Everyone was so impressed by this, that we did it again — twice in a day! This certainly never happened under Mrs Thatcher. So, now I have achieved the biggest cut in interest rates in history. This should get the economy going again, if anything does. And next week we can always get back into the ERM, and we can do the whole thing all over again. When I mentioned this to Norma, who was under sedation in the clinic, he had a relapse.

Monday

The French have shown no small measure of prudence in overwhelmingly voting for my treaty. A huge majority of 1% has made it clear that the French people have rejected Mrs Thatcher outright after she advised them to vote against me.

Perhaps she will now stop interfering in other people's countries, i.e. Britain.

Why do the newspapers go on and on about her, putting her on the front page when she always gets it wrong? Surely Norma and I should be on?

Tuesday

My friend Jeffrey Archer has lost his touch, I'm afraid. This morning he sent round the latest draft of his new novel, which he told me he had been up all night rewriting. It is now called "The PM Bows Out" and, in my judgement, it is totally unrealistic in every way. His hero, the writer Godfrey Bowman, is begged by the Queen to form a government, after the Prime Minister, James Colonel, and his Chancellor, Norris Lapont, are forced to resign after a sterling crisis which leaves them both utterly discredited.

I think Jeffrey has let his imagination run away with him this time.

Biblical Sports Weekly

David dropped after Goliath Test

by Matthew, Mark, Luke and Johnners

THE sling-throwing world was rocked to its foundations yesterday by the news that David is to be dropped following his successful defeat of Goliath.

Said the tousle-haired, laid-back David: "I would have thought that an average of one giant slain for one rock thrown was good enough to be picked for the forthcoming series against the Philistines — but apparently not."

The Jewish selectors, however, defended their decision, saying:

"David is not really the sort of player we are looking for. He has the wrong attitude entirely. We think, however, that Graham Hick is a very promising player and should be given another chance."

ADVERTISEMENT

Before

In this month's *Tatty* – the astonishing transformation of **Norma Major**.

After

From a dowdy housewife, Norma Major has blossomed into one of the world's great beauties.

Also in this month's *Tatty*:
black and white pictures of thick Sloanes at dances.

TATTY

MAJOR STANDS BY HIMSELF

by Our Man In Brussels **E.R.M. Adio**

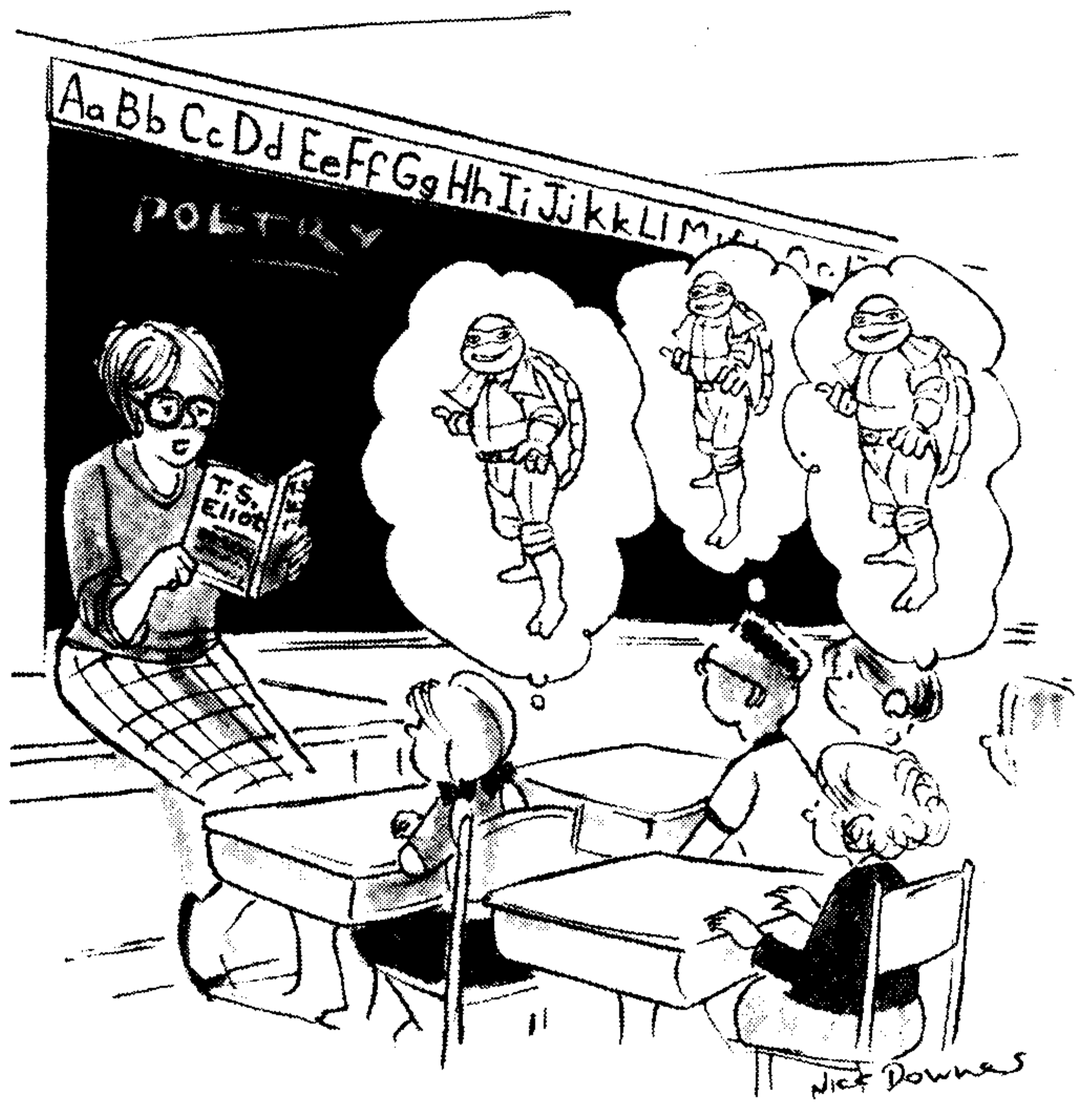
"I am my best friend and I see no reason for me to go", the Prime Minister told reporters last night following demands that he should resign from members of the opposition (Sir William Cash).

"The press are out to get John Major," said the Prime Minister, "but as a loyal supporter of his for many years, I am determined that he should ride out the storm."

Mr Major is known to be furious at the attacks that have been made on himself over the so-called "Pound Affair" and the press coverage which has tried to link himself and the country's financial crisis.

"I passionately believe in a free press," he said, "but there are some things in a man's life which should remain private. Inability to manage the economy is surely one of them."

David Mellor is 42.



"... the women come and go, talking of Michelangelo..."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Prof. Sir Alan Walters

SIR–Whilst in no way wishing to gloat over the total collapse of sterling, I would just like to point out that I have been proved right in everything I said. Ha, ha, ha — I told you so.

A.N. WATNEYS
The Thatcher Foundation,
Liechtenstein.

From Lord Ridley of Nimby

SIR–At this tragic time of economic crisis, I write more in sorrow than in anger to point out that I was entirely right in predicting the whole ghastly mess. I am therefore going to refrain from pointing out what a brilliant man I am.

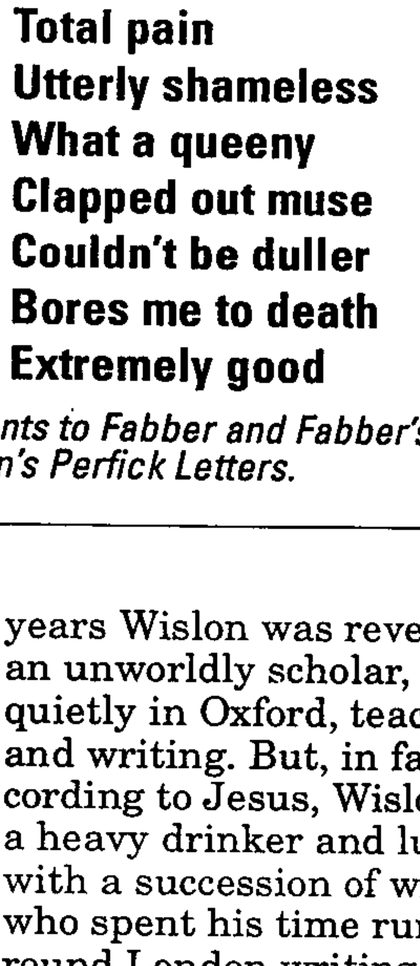
N. RIDLEY
Dunthatchin,
Nimby-on-the-Wold, Glos.

PS: Watch out for the Boche.

From The Rt. Hon. The Lady Thatch, Ex-Supreme Ruler of the Universe (and to come)

SIR–At a time when the need for national unity has never been greater, it would be wrong for me to crow over the total humiliation and discomfiture of my successor. Again and again I told anyone who would listen that taking Britain into the ERM would be the most catastrophic mistake I ever made.

MARGARET HILDA THATCH
(Baroness Handbag of Washed-Up)
House of Ladies, London SW1



Philip Larkin's Literary Rhyming Slang

Frank Kermode	**Silly old toad**
Craig Raine	**Total pain**
Kingsley Amis	**Utterly shameless**
Seamus Heaney	**What a queeny**
Ted Hughes	**Clapped out muse**
Roy Fuller	**Couldn't be duller**
Vikram Seth	**Bores me to death**
Myself	**Extremely good**

With acknowledgements to Fabber and Fabber's Old Pop Larkin's Perfick Letters.

"Son, your Mother and I have decided to start an advertising agency."

NEW BOOKS

The Life of Wislon

by A.N. Jesus

(Sincere-Stevenson, £214.99)

IN the most controversial book of the autumn, author Jesus presents a shocking new view of the semi-mythical figure of A.N. Wislon. For hundreds of years Wislon was revered as an unworldly scholar, living quietly in Oxford, teaching and writing. But, in fact, according to Jesus, Wislon was a heavy drinker and luncher, with a succession of wives, who spent his time running round London writing drivel for the *Evening Standard* in exchange for huge sums of money. Believers in Wislon will have their faith challenged by this devastating reassessment of one of the most influential religious thinkers of all time.

That Crisis

BBC Economic Correspondent Sir Peter Jaybotham Explains

Today's events date from the decision by Nigel Lawson in 1987 to shadow the Deutschmark in the monetary snake that preceded the disputed ERM mechanism, a move that out of necessity limited his successor's scope for action when it came to realigning the weaker currencies to achieve closer parity with the falling dollar, an eventuality which at the time seemed remote, but which with the increasing rise in European interest rates with the consequent slump in confidence in the foreign exchange markets inevitably put pressure on the narrow band structure which, in turn, led to an alarming fall in the value of imported convertibles in a period when the already beleaguered yen was causing ripples as far away as Wall Street who refused to consider the Bundesbank Lombard rate as anything other than a last ditch option for the financial policy direction of Norman Lamont who became boxed in by what began as a...

Every single viewer in the country switches off.

Great Bores Of Today.

"... I mean if I get old I wanna be able to say I've had enough I mean my gran wanted to go and she told my mum 'that's it. I've had a good life and now I want to go' and everyone should have the right to make that decision for themselves and like it's your life and your body right and if you want to go you should be able to you know go out with dignity if right your dog gets ill you have it put down and it's just the same with humans except obviously you've got to be careful with doctors you can't have them playing god they can make mistakes they're only human after all like with my uncle and it could be the thin end of the wedge and the tories would love it wouldn't they? the old people's homes would be empty in no time no you've got to be careful have you seen the new Clint Eastwood film? it's just brilliant..."

ABBOT IT'S THE CHAPEL. THERE'S SMOKE BILLOWING EVERYWHERE. APPARENTLY BROTHER GARY'S GONE TOTALLY MAD..
SAINTS PRESERVE US FROM THAT WRETCHED MAN. HE HAS THE DEVIL IN HIM FOR SURE.
HE'S STILL IN THERE, ABBOT. HE'S A MAN POSSESSED.
COUGH
SPLUTTER
THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH INCENSE GARY. STOP!
I STILL RECKON YOU'D BE BETTER OFF WITH A DRY ICE MACHINE, BROTHER.

MELLOR TAKES 'TEA' WITH PLO SEX BOMB

Parliament to be recalled

by Our Court Staff **P.L. O'Booze**

TOP QC Mr George Carphone today accused Fun Minister David Mellor of "entirely innocent love romps" over a "cup of tea" with a wealthy blonde who has close links with people who have close links with other people who have seen international terrorist Saddam Hussein being interviewed on television.

Cross-examining Mrs Mona Lisa, 32, the legendary forensic interrogator showed no mercy.

CARPHONE: While I am in no way suggesting that a "cup of tea" in this context represents anything more than a totally innocent act of intercourse between consenting adults *(Court laughs at legendary wit)*, was it nevertheless not inviting misinterpretation for you, an attractive young woman, to be alone for up to 20 minutes with a well-known political lothario and his wife? Would you, or would you not agree, Mrs Arafat, that this is a picture of yourself in a skimpy three-piece bathing suit?

SIR HARTLEY REDFACE QC *(for Mrs Gadaffi):* I object, Your Honour. I fail to see where this line of questioning is taking us.

MR JUSTICE COCKLE-DRAKE: I am finding it increasingly interesting. Pray continue, Sir George — and could the usher please arrange for copies of those photographs to be placed in my private chamber?

CARDRIVER: Mrs Hussein, were we to imagine you removing this suit, would we not find you wearing items of underclothing — perhaps skimpy, perhaps lacy?

JUDGE: Who are Messrs Skimpy and Lacy?

REDFACE: I believe, My Lord, that they are female detectives in a televisual entertainment set in the United States of America.

MRS BAUHAUS: I resent that imputation. Mr Mellor and I only met on two occasions, to discuss classical music and the prospects for a settlement of the Gaza Strip problem.

CARBOOT: Was Mr Mellor wearing the Gazza Strip when you made love — or, rather, enjoyed a cup of tea?

(Court erupts in paroxysms of hysteria as hacks note down latest bon mot of Gray's Inn's Mr Filth)

Earlier the court had heard the editor of the *Sunday Mellor*, Mr Richard Snott, describe his story headed DAVE'S AT IT AGAIN **as "in the highest traditions of investigative journalism".**

MR REDFACE: Do you recall, do you not, the precise circumstances in which your article was printed, was it not?

SNOTT: Yeah, I do, so help me God. Our boys were about to go in to the Gulf. The lives of British lads was on the line. It was a moment of supreme national crisis. And what was the so-called Minister for Football doing? He was sitting there having a cosy cuppa with some Arab bint. Makes you sick, dunnit?

JUDGE: I am sorry, Mr Stoat. Are you suggesting that in some way it was the tea which made you feel indisposed? But, talking of tea, I see it is now half-past two and we have been back from lunch for more than five minutes. Perhaps this would be a good time for the Court to adjourn until tomorrow morning, as I have a number of important photographs to examine.

The Court adjourned.

MRS BOWWOW: I resent that suggestion. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation is a humanitarian organisation, entirely devoted to helping elderly, disabled Americans off the decks of cruise liners.

CARPERSON: That is all very well, is it not? But I would ask the court to look at these photographs. *(Intake of breath from jury and cries of "Great, here comes the dirty bit")*

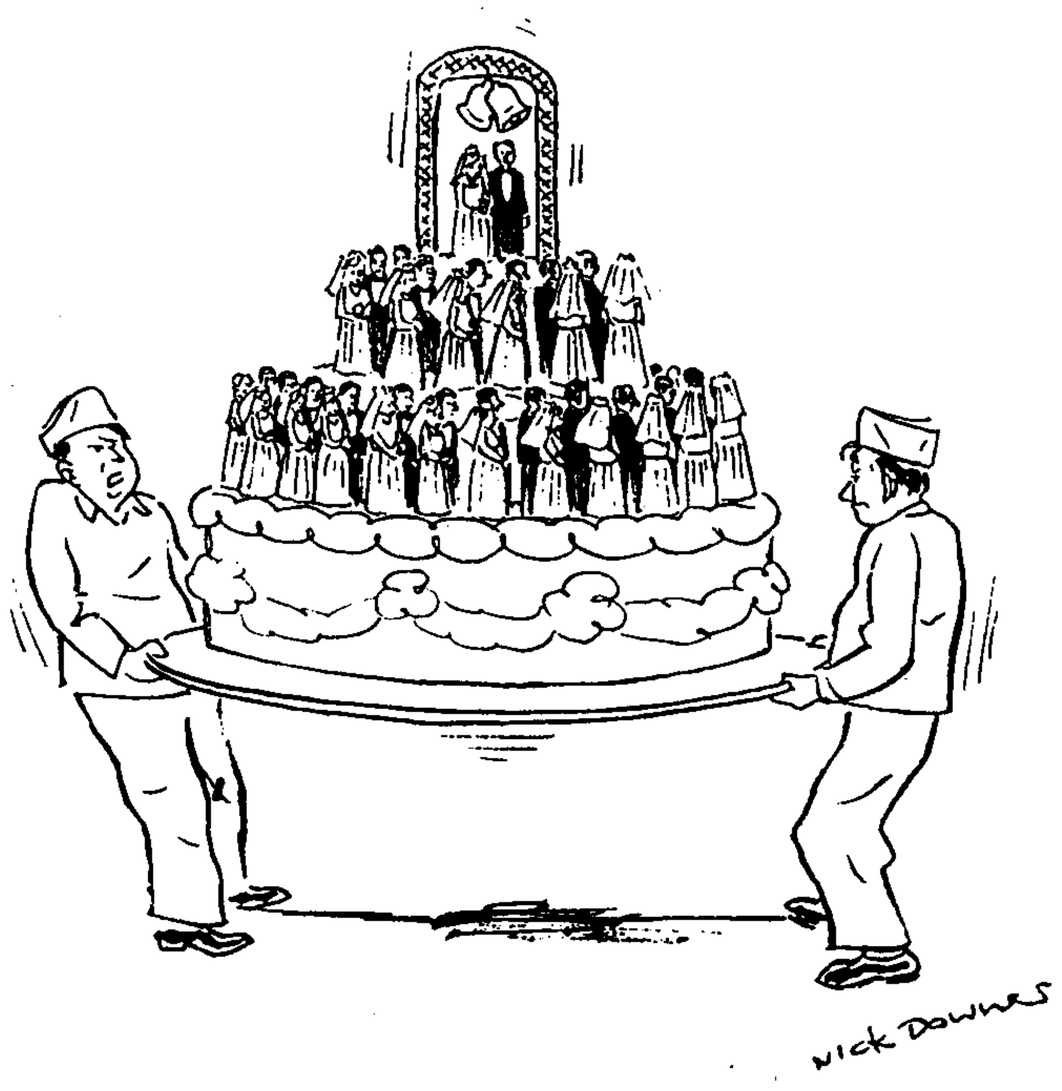
That Mellor-PLO Tea in full

Earl Grey Toe
Hot Water
Buttered Toest with A Bit Of A Jam
Hot Crumpet
Rolls with Honey
(That's enough tea. Ed.)

TOP TEN BORES

This Week		Last Week	Weeks On List
1	Dame Edna Everage	3	2,619
2	Barry Humphries	1	4,712
3	Sir Les Patterson	2	2,220
4	Sandy Stone	6	3
5	Barry McKenzie	4	312
6	Barry McHumphries	5	2
7	Dame Edna Patterson	7	4
8	Les Everage	9	3
9	Humphrey McBarry	10	4
10	Dame Kiri Te Kanawa	–	–

This week's Bores are compiled in conjunction with The Oldie



"No more Moonie weddings"

BOOKER SHORTLIST ROCKS WORLD

Here They Are — The Books No One Is Reading

by Our Literary Correspondent **Mark Beardie**

MRS FOTHERGILL'S DAUGHTERS
by Michelle Tokenwoman

IN her fifth novel, Ms Tokenwoman evokes the ambience of a Picardy farmhouse in the late Fifties. Here live two sisters who discover, by accident, that they are both war criminals. The novel interweaves brutal flashbacks to their savage past with recondite digressions on how to make horseradish sauce, the frescoes of Bari di Fantoni and the railway timetables of pre-1914 Norway.

"A rich tapestry, as evocative as it is elusive — but with enough violence to keep everyone happy."
Auberon Gore
The Decanter

THE ASYLUM KEEPER
by Michael Onionbhaji

SRI Lankan-born Bhaji, who now lives in Ontario, sets his epic 579-page novel in a mental hospital in Umbria, where an elderly Japanese war criminal has disturbing memories of his wartime love affair with a mysterious Lithuanian ballet dancer.

"Tough, raw and cryptic in its irony, Bhaji's sprawling, violent masterpiece is both violent and sprawling."
Hilary Sprawling
London Review of Books

THE OLD PEAT BOG
by Tochain O'Irishman

THE body of an elderly Irish priest is found at the bottom of a peat bog in western Ireland. He has been brutally murdered? Was he, in fact, a war criminal, as his friend, the deaf-and-dumb Japanese nun suspects? Inspector Morse is called in to investigate. *(Surely far too interesting? Ed.)*

"Raw, tough, uncompromising — O'Irishman's tense, passionate novel is a masterpiece of passionate, tense writing."
Dame Edna O'Booze
Sunday Times

(That's enough books, Ed.)

DEAD DOGS
by Sir Ian McKellen

MCKELLEN spins an extraordinary moral allegory about two disabled dogs trapped in an abattoir on the outskirts of a Midlands town. Are they all that they seem — or are they really war criminals on the run? The horrifying flashback to their training in Auschwitz is followed by a savage finale played out against the stark background of the Berlin Wall.

"Tough, violent, raw — McEwen's Export is a man's beer in a man's world. Brutally intense and intensely brutal."
Brute Anderton
Fascists and Fascistmen

THE MADHOUSE
by Christopher Hopeless

SOUTH African-born Hopeless paints a macabre picture of life in a North London home for distressed gentlefolk. Is General Gussett really the man he seems — or is he Obergruppenführer Gussettdorfer, the infamous SS Commandant, known as "the Black Dog of Buchenwald"? Matron Soames helps him to explore the dark secrets of his wartime past, and their relationship blossoms into a disturbing sado-masochistic frenzy, in which it is no longer clear who is the victim and who the torturer.

"Raw, passionate, brutal — Hopeless's novella is disturbing in its intensity, and intense in its disturbity."
David Splodge
Plagiarism Today

MANSELL TO QUIT

by Our Motor Racing Correspondent
Not Very Frank Williams

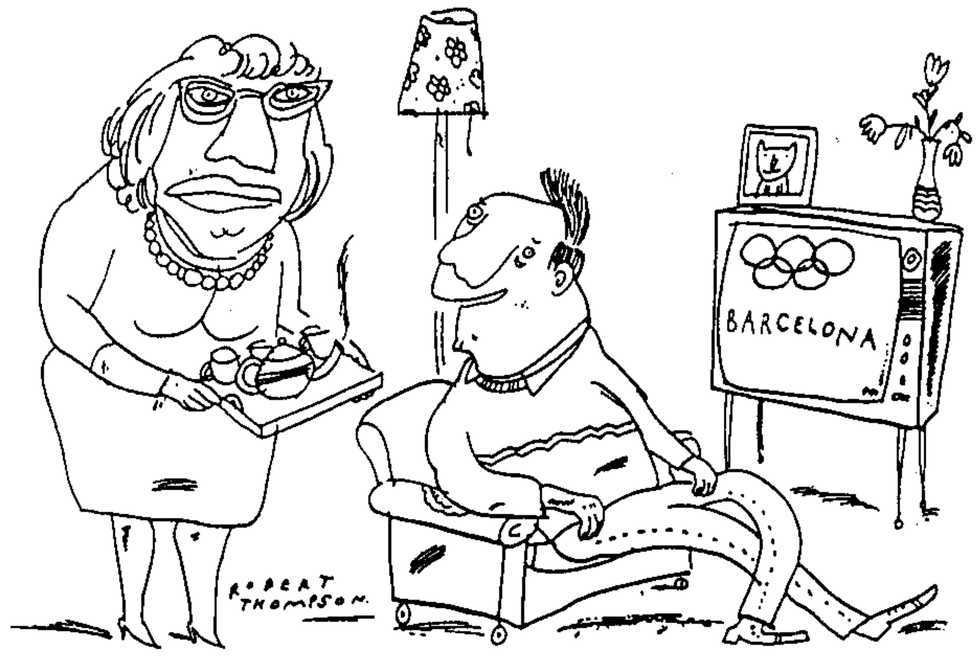
An emotional Nigel Mansell told a hushed and asleep press conference yesterday:

"That's it. No more retirement speeches. I quit. I'm going back to Motor Racing."

It was the end of a career which has spanned a record number of retirements, and the announcement sent journalists rushing for their beds. Mansell, Britain's World Champion Bore, pledged:

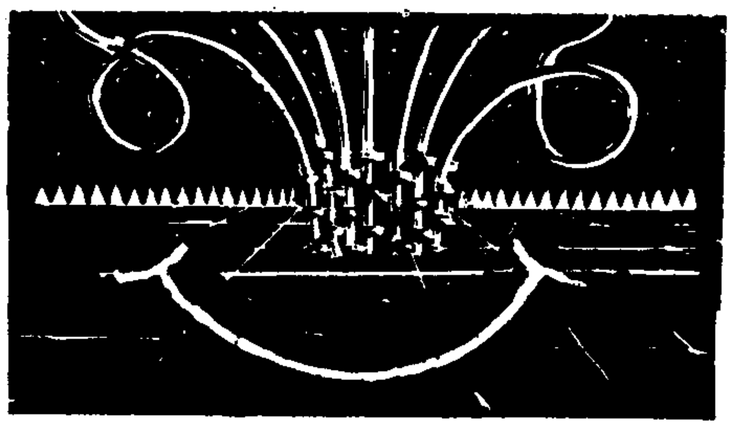
"This is the last time you see me quit. Until next time."

However, Britain's Moustache Ace was beaten to the finish of his speech by arch-rival Ayrton Senna who raced up behind him and announced his own retirement first.



"Newsflash, Doris – the British bloke's just finished the marathon"

DIARY



STEPHEN FRY

I fair wonder whether, or, indeed whither (get on with it you silly noodle!), or even, perchance, weather (the bountifully bespectacled Mr Michael Fish permitting) I might bend your collective ear for the merest chink of a scintilla of a whoopsy of a moment, or, as my great aunt Deirdre would rejoice in saying, "just a mo"?

I have no wish to waste your time with excessive verbiage of the columnar variety, albeit bouncily, fluffily, hands-knees-and-boomps-a-daisily jocular verbiage from the most cheeky yet charming of saucy scriveners. Like you, dear lemon popsicle, I count myself a good egg plucked from a cardboard carton of similarly ovoid comestibles (incidentally, are there two words in our glorious English language more otiose, glucoid and asparamatic than "Farm Fresh"?). That being so, I regard it as simple good manners for those of us lucky enough to be entrusted with the delicate yet noble duty of wielding the old quill over three or four sheets of Basildon Bond never to spend too long dragging out the introductory paraphernalia to any article. Instead I whizzy-whizz things along in a forwardly direction, before ending on a rather more serious note, condemning, in suitably daffy yet peculiarly old-hat manner, the prevailing *mores* of Thatcher's Britain, the kind of *mores* that allow a lorry-load of Canadian redwoods to be wantonly destroyed simply to accommodate the ludicrous wafflings of a celebrity columnist. Heigh-ho.

Oh, bottoms. Bottoms, bottoms, bottoms. Bots, botty-boos, bibbetty-bobbety-botty-bot-bots. BOTTOMS. B-O-T-T-O-M-S. BOT-TOMS. Botty-botty-botty-tom-tom-toms. Bbbooottttoommmsss. *Botties*. And, once again, bottoms. Bottoms, bottoms, bottoms.

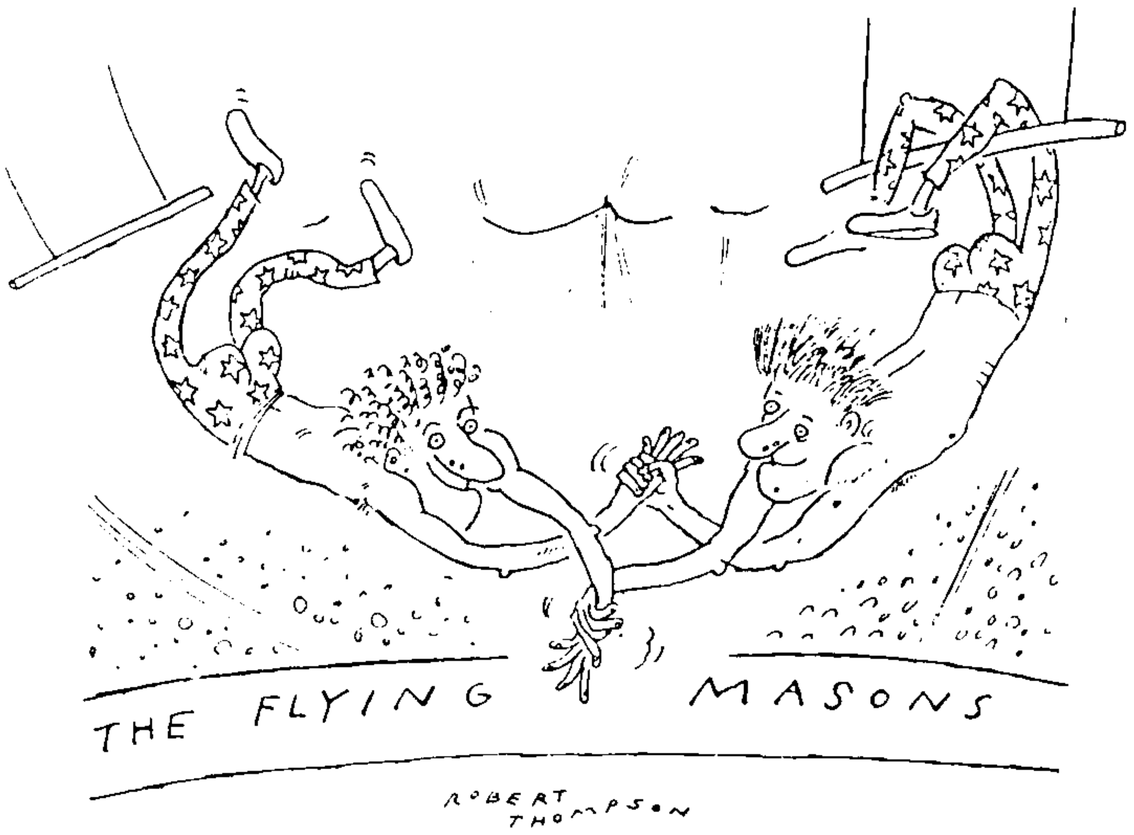
What a lovely yummy word BOTTOMS is, all lovely and cuddley and generally pretty bottomy. And how infinitely the very weave and fabric of our national life would benefit from the enforced repetition of the noun "bottom" at least twice an hour by all public servants, not least the present Cabinet. Botty-botty-BOTTOMS! I count it as an obscenity that anyone in the latter half of the twentieth century should be shocked by that most innocent and excellent and generally buttocksome of words. Not until we as a nation can shout the word "BOTTOM" freely will we be able to count ourselves as truly sophisticated, truly grown-up, truly capable of entering our post-colonial phase with our heads — and botties! — held high.

If you were now, this very and absolute minute, to trundle upstairs and to open your upper bedroom window — mind that vase of fragrant geraniums, if you please! — to its furthest notch and then, spreading your arms as wide as a double-decker bus, to fling a handful of much-loved Dinky Toys into the gently meandering street below, I doubt very much whether one of the aforementioned vehicular playthings would not land without due let or hinderance upon the head of a thoroughly English comic writer whose style is not, like an ancient Aunt on her fiery steed, riding on the back of that finest of old English scriveners, namely Sir Pelham Greville Wodehouse.

Yet is it not time for English comic pros, than whose lustre none is more lustrous, to recognise that the aspirant humourist would be well advised to take no Tips from P.G (!). Wodehouse's natural talent for comedy, prosody and metaphor was as infinitely superior to his successors' as my Aunt Dahlia's flowery hat is superior to a... to a... yes! — to a late lamented goldfish. Flagrant and effulgent longwindedness, awkward, repetitive and inconsequential similes and an over-enthusiastic reliance on the juxtaposition of the weighty with the inconsequential is as poor a substitute for the real Wodehouse as... as... as... yes! — as a dead goldfish would be for my Aunt Dahlia's flowery hat. Ho, hum.

Tiddley-pom. As has become evident over the past brace of months, Neil Kinnock has not been elected Prime Minister, despite all one's and one's comedy colleagues' better efforts. Tiddley-pom. Another close-on half-a-dozen years of Conservative rule. Deary me. Clean hankies all round, methinks. For quite a few days during the election campaign, one did one's bit for the Party by escorting Labour bigwigs around the provinces "spreading the word", as the gentlemen in what I believe are known as "the movies" have it. Personally, I spent quite a little bit of my precious tick-tocking time explaining to all and sundry what a Labour victory would mean — ie, all sorts of jolly things, like greater choice in education, a really efficient private rail network, lower taxes all round and more widespread membership of BUPA — but they still voted Conservative. My mind is still doing its fair share of boggling. I heard tell that the public could never shake off the idea that Neil Kinnock is essentially "lightweight". Odd, when one remembers that throughout his campaign he had little me or my good friend Ben Elton by his side assuring everyone that he wasn't. Oh, fiddlesticks, say I. Those of us who are simply dying to shout "Botty" from the rooftops will have to wait until 1997. Statisticians might care to sum up my feelings about the Labour defeat in one word: wee-wee. Or is that two words, dearest dictionary?

"Some of his pieces are slightly less funny than others, but that is only to be expected of someone visually so brilliantly witty," wrote one of that vile, amoeba-like and slimey species we laughingly call "critics" of my most recent book. Of course, this "critic" is free to say what he pleases, and I would be the last to suggest that my new book is anything but a variety of similar-ish sheets of paper stapled together and covered with an indifferent selection of ill-considered words. But how typical that critic's lofty, contemptuous, thoroughly bottyish remark is of everything that displeases and revolts one about those sententious morsels of human excrement! Personally, I find it hard to detect a single shred of ordinary human decency in such ill-mannered and heartless scorn. That anyone pretending to call himself a human being should smear such hatred over another member of his own race is depraved and obscene. And it is certainly something that I would never do, being just a mild, fun-loving chap. Ho hum. Tiddley-pom. Help yourself to a wine gum. Chin-chin. Toodle-pip.



Slough and Windsor Breast Screening

Buy your tickets for a great show

Windsor & Maidenhead Observer

Mr Major has enough problems without adding that of a Cabinet Minister whose pubic image has been reduced to that of a foolish Lothario.

Today

Literary Review

Zzz... it's Booker bedtime

THE BOOKER shortlist is dreary and predictable, the fault lying as much with dreary, predictable writers as with the dreary and predictable judges.

Suggestions that this may have been an even more than usually grim year for British fiction are confirmed by the fact that — despite the ritual cries of dismay about the make-up of the shortlist — critics have struggled to identify books which ought to have been chosen instead.

The *Evening Standard*'s A.N. Wislon called for more famous names — Anita, Sir Kingsley, P.D. James, Malcolm Bradbury — but this old farts' manifesto seems unlikely to attract much enthusiasm beyond the office of Wislon's new editor, Stewart Steven, who regards Dick Francis as literary fiction.

Otherwise, the only shock-horror omission anyone could find was Rose Tremain's semi-pisspoor sex-change yarn *Sacred Country*. This was amusing, as most of the literary editors and critics bemoaning her exclusion included in their pieces the traditional denunciation of the influence on the shortlist of the University of East Anglia Writing School (represented in 1992 list by Ian McEwan). Fact: Poor, sad, non-shortlisted outsider Rose Tremain teaches this notorious course.

The prize will be announced on 13 October, with most of the money at the bookmakers on Michael Ondaatje's Identikit Booker book (see accompanying review) and most of the industry rooting for Unsworth's 19th century Thatcherite yarn, *Sacred Hunger*. But in the interim a number of sub-Booker prizes should be awarded.

THE HUBRIS SHIELD A strong shortlist this year. The early contender was former lit-ed Sebastian Faulks who for some reason decided to autograph the copies submitted to judges of *A Fool's Alphabet*: a Booker first in 24 years. However, Faulks's doomed vanity was soon eclipsed. In 1992, a surprising number of authors have behaved as if they had a divine right to the prize. "Yes. I expected to be on the shortlist," Edna O'Brien told *The Guardian*. Capping even this arrogance, Secker and Warburg fixed the launch dinner-party for Malcolm Bradbury's Europisspoor *Doctor Criminale* for the evening of the day the shortlist was announced, anticipating celebrations. In fact, neither Bradbore nor O'Bore made the final 20. The dinner was reportedly a maudlin affair.

THE GOOD EGG CUP The likeliest reason for the foolish certainty of literary timeservers that this would be their year is the presence on the judges' panel of Dame Harriet Harvey Wood, doyenne of the British Council. For decades her job has been to fly writers like Bradbore, O'Bore and P.D. James around the world to discuss their work in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth. Hence the older writers were hoping she would book them a place on the shortlist with the efficiency with which she had arranged their tickets to Budapest. But the word is that — with an integrity which is to the credit of the British Council — she declined, when it came to the judging, to back her mates if they turned in sub-standard work.

THE POLLY (PUBLICISTS ECONOMY WITH TRUTH AWARD) On the jacket of Paul Watkins's sub-sub-Hemingway *The Promise of Light*, Faber excitedly claim that the young man's first novel was "nominated for a Booker Prize". Juvenile critic Tom Shone was so impressed by this information that he made it the intro to his loving profile of Watkins in *The Indescribablyboring*. Fact: You can't be nominated for the Booker; you are entered by your publisher. What Faber means is that Watkins was entered for the Booker. In this sense, 100 books a year — including, this time round, bodice-ripper Dorothy Dunnett — are "nominated" for the Booker.

THE POST-FEMINIST AWARD There has been the usual criticism of the lack of female writers on the list (1 out of 6 in 1992, slightly up from 0 last year). This makes people like Carmen Calil angry and generally leads them to call for more and more female judges. They should be careful. In many years, women judges have kept off women writers proposed by male judges. This year impeccably-feminist chairperson Victoria Glendinning described one of the chaps as "a condescending bastard" when he worried about the small number of women on the list.

The *Sunday Times* tried to whip up some hysteria with the suggestion that the only book out of the six by a woman didn't make the original long-list of 24 and was mysteriously inserted into the short-list at the last minute. Not true.

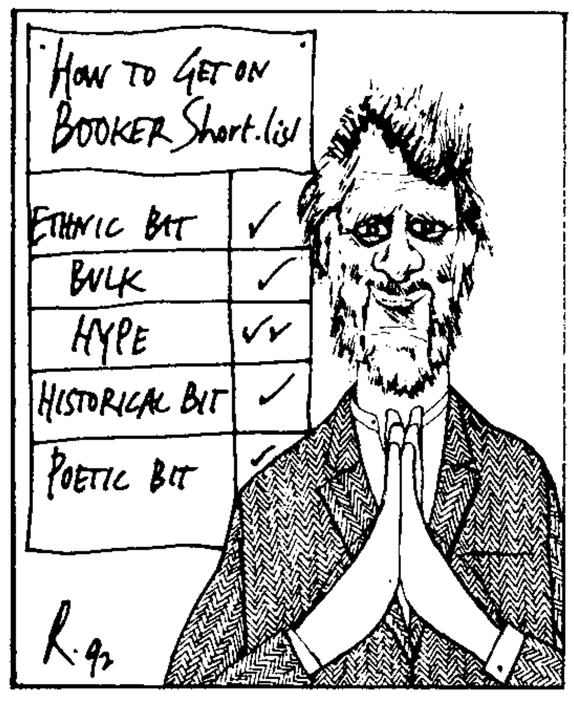
FALL FROM GRACE MEDAL In recent years, Faber has seemed to have a lock on the shortlist, providing at least one of the six and — in several years — the winner. Now the Queen Square magic seems to be fading. No Faber books made the 1992 list and while two were close — Michael Dibdin's thriller *Cabal* and Nigel Williams's comedy *They Came From SW19* — neither was actually entered by the company. They were called in by the judges. The official Faber trio — Watkins, P.D. James and dreary Deirdre Madden — finished nowhere. Are Matthew Evans and fiction chief Robert McCrum losing their touch?

THE CLEAN-UP PRIZE The real winner this year is Peter Straus, Picador's publisher and last of the great bookmen, who regards publishing as servicing literature as opposed to progressing his own career. He is less morose and Eeyore-like than usual at present as no fewer than four of the six shortlisted books will be gracing Picador's paperback list next year, the imprint's 21st anniversary. In addition, Straus has just published *The Butcher Boy* in hardback.

Coincidentally, Straus for the first time this year became a member of the Booker board of management which appoints the judges and Mark Lawson, one of the judges, is published by Straus.

THE OVERALL LOSER The main loser this year is Terry Maher of Dillons. As none of the shortlisted titles is published by Secker & Warburg or Heinemann or any other imprint of Reed International, for the first time in three years Dillons won't be able to cock a snook at the net book agreement and discount certain shortlisted titles.

A patient in need of treatment



The English Patient
Michael Ondaatje
(Bloomsbury, £14.99)

THE publication, promotion and reception of Michael Ondaatje's new novel might be summarised by the heading A NOVICE'S GUIDE TO APPEARING ON THE BOOKER SHORTLIST. The following table does not purport to be exhaustive, but it has been sufficient to secure *The English Patient*'s success.

1. FIND SOMEONE ETHNIC Booker judges like foreigners — everyone knows that English writers can scarcely hold a pen these days — and the more exotic the better. This year's word in informed literary circles is "pluralist", which is shorthand for "abroad". This immediately puts Michael Ondaatje, who has the inestimable advantage of having been born in Sri Lanka, up there with Okri and Ishiguru. A related Ondaatje plus-point is that, despite his glowing international reputation, nobody in this country has ever heard of him.

2. BULK IT OUT Length is strength. *The Famished Road* and *Possession*, the last two winners, weighed in at over 500 pages. Barry Unsworth's much fancied *Sacred Hunger* is over 600. Consequently Bloomsbury has done its utmost to make *The English Patient* look like a long book. This has taken some doing, as it's actually quite a short book; but by using a large typeface and inserting great numbers of blank pages (41 of the book's 300-odd pages consist of white space) the designers managed to get away with it, with the predictable result that everyone is talking about Michael Ondaatje's "epic new novel..."

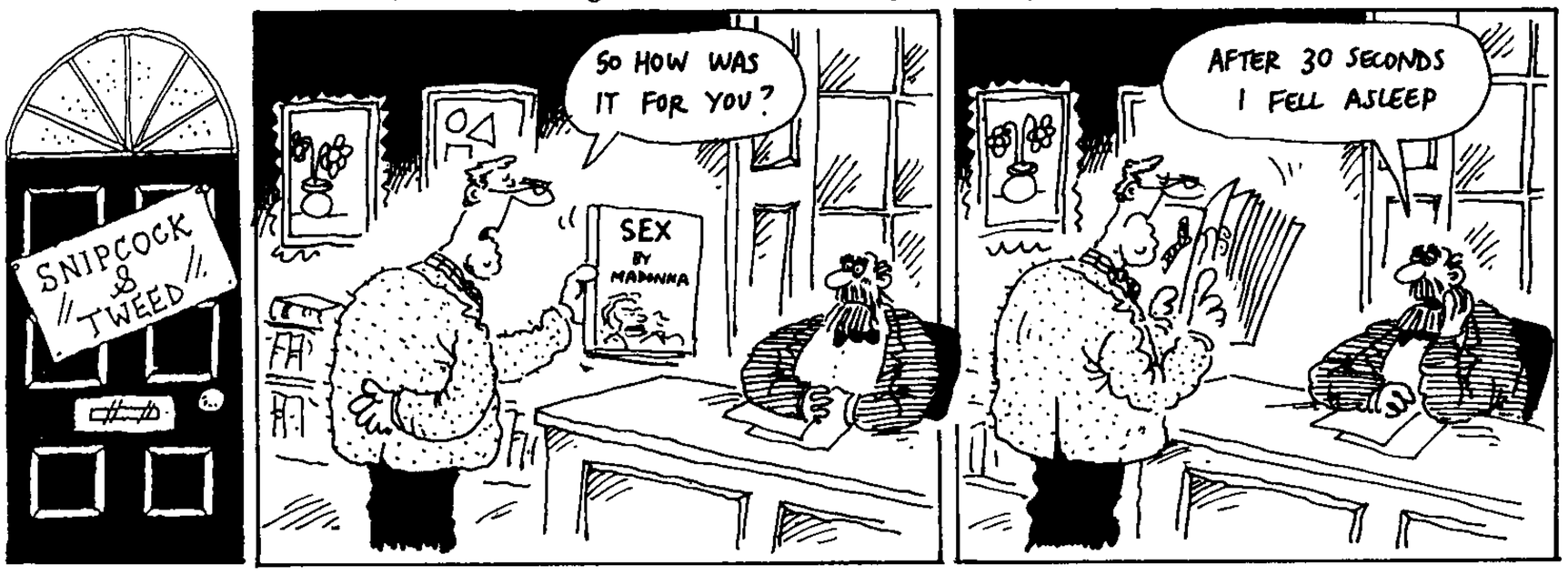
3. HYPE IT UP Adverts in the books pages, interviews, the usual. Bloomsbury's ploy — a risky one as such confidence occasionally annoys — was for Liz Calder, the book's editor, to write personally to literary editors extolling its merits. Not all of them were fooled by this — see Robert Winder's review in the *Independent* — but there was enough response to make the exercise worthwhile.

4. MAKE IT HISTORICAL *The English Patient*'s key advantage is its World War II setting. This gives academic critics a chance to write about OK themes like the dying empire and British hypocrisy, whether they are present in the book or not (in this case, not).

5. GIVE IT SOME POETRY Nobody ever got anywhere in the Booker stakes with austere reserve. Ondaatje writes passages such as: "He has no one. He is exhausted not from the desert but from solitude. Madox gone. The woman translated into leaves and twigs, the broken glass to the sky like a jaw above him." That this is patently overwritten is beside the point; it has the authentic Booker ring.

So there you go. Ethnic, inflated, hyped, historical and poetic. How can he fail? Expect Ondaatje's craggy features to recur in the weekend supplements between now and judgement day, but don't expect this pleasant, wistful little novel to be reviewed on its merits. That would be too much to ask.

'Bookerworm'



VACCINATION

Pricks and the Tory conscience

IN 1978, when there was a Labour government, a group of right-wing Tory backbenchers came to the offices of *Private Eye* to urge a "campaign" against "government meanness on whooping cough vaccine".

The visit coincided with a long and passionate campaign in the *Daily Mail* on behalf of children who had been brain-damaged after their parents followed the enthusiastic call from the department of health to vaccinate their children against whooping cough.

The Labour government had just bowed to a campaign by the parents, but did not follow the advice of a royal commission on personal injury for a full compensation scheme. Instead it offered a measly £10,000 (worth nearly three times that much today) for any child whose parents could prove to a medical tribunal that at least 80 per cent of the child's brain damage had been caused "on the balance of probabilities" by the vaccine.

It was against this "meanness" that the compassionate Tories campaigned. They were joined by their party under the new leadership of that most compassionate of politicians, Margaret Thatcher, who promised "support for the intention that there should be proper compensation which should apply to all degrees of injury". Impressed by this promise (and under the quaint illusion that Margaret Thatcher keeps her promises) the stricken parents reluctantly cooperated with the Labour scheme.

At the *Eye*, the Tory campaigners were met with some scepticism. They were politely turned away. Subsequent events have tended to justify the *Eye*'s approach.

Despite constant lobbying over 13 years in support of the most heart-rending cases, the Tory government has done precisely nothing to improve the scheme it denounced. The lump sum compensation for claims after 1985 was raised (to take account of inflation) to £20,000 and from 1991 to £30,000. But the first batch of parents who got the £10,000 and whose problems and expenses grew with their brain-damaged children, have not had a penny extra — nor have the strict conditions for getting the money been improved.

The parents have been told they can sue for negligence like anyone else, and, after banding together to share costs, are doing so. No fewer than 160 solicitors are now engaged in a joint action against the health department. The action has years to run before it even gets to court. At the same time, the Government, as part of its programme of cuts to make the economy lean and fit again, cut the grant for the research at Porton which sought to extract from the whooping cough vaccine its damaging element. The scientists, without government funds, stuck to their task, and eventually came up with a formula which makes whooping cough vaccine much safer. This good news, however, has to be weighed against the bad news about other vaccines the department of health has pressed upon the nation's children.

First was the Salk inactivated polio vaccine which was imported by the Government even after there were reports in the United States of people getting polio as a result of the vaccine. This was followed by the live oral vaccine. Between 1970 and 1991 there have been 41 cases of children (or people associated with the children) catching polio from the vaccine. This is, of course, a tiny percentage of the total benefiting from the vaccine, but for the stricken families it is no less devastating for that. Moreover, as the Association of Parents of Vaccine-Damaged Children points out in a report this month: "Half the cases of polio reported to the Public Health Laboratory Service are the result of vaccination."

This is the background to the recent news that routine and much-publicised MMR vaccinations for measles, mumps and rubella have resulted in children being struck down with meningitis. The reports are all the more shocking, as they follow triumphant noises from the department of health about the possibility of a new vaccine *against* meningitis.

No one knows exactly how many children have been struck down by this latest vaccine-related illness. What their parents are discovering fast, however, is that nearly 20 years after the first parents' campaign on this issue, and 14 years after the Tory Party and the *Daily Mail* lathered themselves into a furious campaign for a full compensation scheme, there is no such scheme in place. The parents will have to join the long and lugubrious queue to sue for negligence.

The same stripe of politician who lectured the *Eye* about campaigning on this issue in 1978 is now in office, complaining that "scare campaigns" will put people off the vaccines and increase the nation's sickness. All those years ago, however, their predecessors were making the irrefutable point that if there is a decent and effective compensation scheme available for the few who are damaged by vaccines, more people will make use of them.

ON THE BUSES

Routemaster baiters...

SAFELY ensconced at Westminster, the Tories' bus privatisation programme has earmarked London Buses as a small, juicy fruit to sell.

It will carry a modest price tag for its ten separate units — of between £5 million and £15 million, depending on how gullible are the potential buyers — and if the garage sites are thrown in, add a zero and expect bids from familiar property sharks, who now turn out to be experienced passenger vehicle operators as well.

Although no strategy has been officially indicated, a target date of early 1993 has been set for the sale, with the less attractive date (for buyers) of 1995 for deregulation — alias *Bus Wars*, which has become such a popular spectator sport in places like Sheffield.

A cynical dutch auction is predicted in which the more predatory private operators will be pitted against MBOs by one or two of the more commercially capable units. Current rumour has it that the MD of one London Buses subsidiary, nicknamed "The Barrow Boy" by disrespectful colleagues, already has finance in place. Another unit, operating south of the Thames, has been fattened for the slaughter by the simple expedient of being "awarded" any and every route it has tendered for.

And on the private side of the bus business, one of the big four has sold off its southern operations, either to stem losses or in preparation for a bid for one of the London units.

There is nervousness at all levels inside the units at the thought of being cast adrift on the stormy seas of private operation, not least being captained by directors and senior managers whose competence is questionable. Witness the demise of the eleventh London Buses unit, which was dismembered after a strike by platform staff and drivers who were incensed when managers called for a 10 percent cut in wages to keep existing routes which had been tendered for and won "competitively" against private operators.

There are also unresolved questions, such as who will be lumbered with the pre-owned, collectors items known as the fleet? With the exception of the smaller, newer buses, the average age of double deckers is 10 to 14 years, climbing to 30 for the venerable Routemasters.

The punter, meanwhile, can look forward to extra gridlock and disruption to services. It is being suggested that an operator need only give 42 days' notice of any commencement, variation or cancellation of a route, which may be commercially convenient but is not exactly desirable for those on the Clapham omnibus who rely on public transport to get to work.

WEST MIDLANDS RHA

Fowler by the day

WHILE Sir Norman Fowler, Tory party chairman, was lamely defending the Government and Norman Lamont over the sterling crisis, another of his "good ideas" was overseeing further financial havoc in the West Midlands.

Fowler appointed Sir James Ackers chairman of the regional health authority there with the aim of injecting "business flair" into the NHS. How successful he has been can be judged by the number of rats jumping the RHA ship, and the latest revelation of financial blunders costing tens of millions of pounds.

The most recently departed rat is regional director of finance Martin Davies. He made a tactful exit just days before a scathing report was released by the Audit Commission. It condemned Davies's former colleague Chris Watney, director of supplies, for spending £2.5 million on American consultants URG. They had promised to save the RHA £50 million. In fact they saved nothing and blew £350,000 on hiring London houses and aircraft "to get to work". Davies went, according to the report, because he failed to check URG's expense claims.

What no one has been told is that Davies, like Watney, received a huge pay-off of several tens of thousands of pounds to keep his mouth shut after his departure. Watney, who resigned last year and is on a world sailing trip, has been effectively scapegoated by Ackers who knew the auditor would be unable to interview him. But Ackers, architect of the RHA's disasters, has had a shock. News of the report has reached Watney at his base in the Cook Islands and, in a rare case of a rat returning from a floating ship to a sinking one, is coming back to England to tell his story.

For his part, Ackers may want to explain why he told auditors he knew nothing of the deal with URG, despite attending a dinner with URG's top executives, plus Watney and Davies, to celebrate its original signing. He is desperately clinging on because his own company went bust last year and he needs the £25,000-a-year RHA salary. He must also be bracing himself for a series of other scandals.

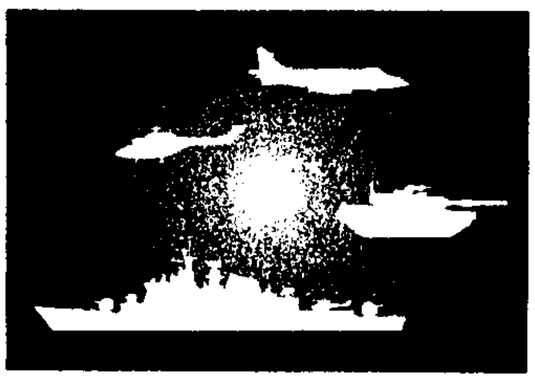
First is likely to centre on the secret report compiled by KPGM Peat Marwick into the disastrous merger of central and south Birmingham district health authorities, which has left south Birmingham £30 million short. That happened because all central Birmingham's disillusioned financial staff quit, leaving the accounts in chaos. No one was appointed to replace them for months.

Then there is Ackers's privatisation of the RHA's computer bureau as Qa Business Services, which collapsed within 18 months losing 400 ex-NHS jobs. The remains were bought by AT&T Istel, who took the RHA for £4 million over its Healthtrac scheme. This was meant to be a computerised supply-ordering system for hospitals; but it never worked and was scrapped by the new national NHS supplies directorate earlier this year.

What has not yet emerged is that a senior member of the RHA team that commissioned the system was married to a senior member of the AT&T sales team. The district auditor is looking into the deal and a report is expected by Christmas.

Finally — or not — there is the Landmark Project, meant to be a privatised version of the RHA's estates and property division, which would sell off the thousands of acres of land released by Ackers's plan to close dozens of hospitals. It was meant to run a series of huge developments and become a successful company. But as soon as the Government gave district health authorities autonomy, they took their business elsewhere. Landmark is down to a handful of staff who twiddle their thumbs all day in offices at a Bromsgrove mental hospital. Business flair indeed!

ARMING IRAQ



A supergun with silencer...

WILL ANYTHING be revealed in the forthcoming case of R v Henderson and others about the arming of Iraq's dictatorship when there was a government embargo on such exports?

Paul Henderson and his fellow defendants are former directors of Matrix Churchill, the Midlands machine tool specialist which was a subsidiary of Tube Investments.

Henderson and Co are charged with breaking the embargo. The case is being brought by HM Customs and Excise, which is still smarting at the way previous such cases have been subject to interference from on high (cf: the case of Bristol engineer Chris Cowley, and the even more remarkable case of Ordtech at Reading crown court in which a gang of embargo-breakers were described by the judge as "patriots" and slapped firmly on the wrists).

If customs sticks to its guns (to coin a phrase) and faces up to the vigorous defence being prepared by the lawyers for the former Matrix Churchill men, some very interesting facts might emerge. But there are two warning signs.

First, customs officers who make a lot of noise about government interference are then inclined to shut up when they face the music. The performance of senior customs men (Sir Brian Unwin, T.D. Byrne, P.G. Pigden, Barry Riley and Alexander Russell) in front of the Commons select committee inquiry into supergun was pathetic.

Secondly — and perhaps more importantly — anxious spooks are already rushing round to judges armed with PI [public interest] orders. These orders, once signed by a judge, ban from court proceedings any information whose publication is deemed to be a threat to the public interest. It seems the "public interest" in the Henderson case may be so extensive there is a danger little of any interest will emerge in open court.

RIVER POLLUTION

Fish? A bit fin on the ground

YORKSHIRE Water bosses, never slow to spend customers' money on improving their company's image, will sponsor an angling competition on the River Aire in Leeds in an attempt to show that water quality there is improving.

Anglers might prefer the ultra-profitable monopoly to spend money speeding up work to reduce the effluent pouring into the river from sewage works at Esholt and Knostrop. In places, the river is 70 per cent sewage.

Taking no chances, then, the angling competition will be held just upstream of the Knostrop sewage works. Enterprising anglers will be disqualified if they net any of the estimated 10,000 dead fish floating in the Aire after being poisoned by pollution from a chemical fire at the Allied Colloids plant in Bradford.

The public is warned not to eat the fish — even though they come ready-fried.

ENERGY

Another solar eclipse

IT SHOULD have been the highlight of the World Renewable Energy Congress: Dr Mary Archer, renowned solar power expert and a member of the Government's renewable energy advisory group, was — finally — to reveal the group's findings.

So said the official programme; and most of the 450 delegates crowded into the Hexagon in Reading to hear her revelations. But the fragrant Mary never appeared. Without explanation, Professor Ali Sayigh, the chairman, said she was to be replaced by Mike Harper, energy campaigner from Friends of the Earth — an odd substitute for someone on a government committee.

So where was the wife of the man with the spotless back and reputation? Word circulated that she had had to go abroad, but the "double booking" explanation was decidedly strange given Dr Archer's reputation for efficiency. In truth, like everyone concerned in the Government's reconsideration of renewable energy, she had expected that the work would have been completed long ago and that she would be able to talk about it freely. But she couldn't.

There are those in government circles who have no wish at all to hear good news about energy from non-polluting sources, and they hoped the spectre would go away. The committee, which includes some of the country's leading scientists, has had to overcome inertia, lethargy and institutional opposition to any sort of change, and has been forced to sit on and on and on.

In August 1991 the Government said its report was expected "early in 1992". In November it repeated that it would be "at the beginning of 1992". In January 1992 ministers put it off until April. In March, they made it early spring. In April the new energy minister Tim Eggar indicated that the Government was looking to the autumn. Then came the news that Dr Archer was to reveal all this month. Now the date has vanished again.

This was one of two studies set up in the approach to the general election when John Wakeham, then energy secretary, was trying to play Mr Nice Guy and see if he could make words speak louder than actions by making a few empty gestures.

The other inquiry — into wave energy — has had an even worse experience: it is now 18 months past its target publication date.

It was announced in April 1989 as a response to an exposure of the attempts made to kill off wave energy. Professor Stephen Salter, inventor of Salter's Duck (see *Eyes passim*), told the select committee on energy of the dirty tricks that had made his clever invention appear hopelessly expensive. The select committee called for an inquiry to test his allegations, and was itself shut down as a reward.

Salter's allegations were reported in *Private Eye* in August 1988, and the Government set up a two-man inquiry. It was due to last two years, which wave energy researchers considered needlessly long. Some suspected that its reporting date, in the summer of 1991, had been designed to tide the Government over until after a general election, then expected in summer 1991. When the election was delayed, so was the report.

One of the two scientists resigned, the Government ignored a call for him to be replaced and so one survivor, Tom Thorpe, was left to tackle an enormous task alone. He was supposed to investigate all the wave energy inventions and then seek agreement between the researchers' estimates for their own devices and those of an energy department committee.

It was an impossible job because no one will know how well wave power will work until a full-scale prototype goes to sea. While the opportunities for nit-picking and filibustering are infinite, it is the technology that offers the best hope of revival to the construction, shipbuilding and electrical engineering industries when the Government decides to invest in the real economy.

Month after month there were forecasts that Thorpe's task would be completed "next month". It is still awaited. Again, there are people in the energy establishment who staked their reputations on saying wave energy would never be viable — and they do not intend to surrender their position lightly.

Going for the burn

BURNING rubbish to make electricity can be highly profitable so long as one's neighbours don't object.

National Power is thus doing its best to win the understanding of councillors at Gravesham, Kent, who will shortly be asked to decide whether or not to grant permission for a rubbish plant in the grounds of the old oil-burning Northfleet power station.

To this end the privatised power generator took five councillors (three Tory and two Labour) and senior council officials on a trip to the United States, all expenses paid. (According to a council spokesman, there was no ultra-modern station anywhere nearer.) Also in the party were two members of the local action group, which is worried about pollution and, according to leader Joan Morris, not keen on 570 "lorry movements" a day (ie dust carts lumbering in with "fuel"). "We have an awful traffic problem without that," she said.

The council is divided 22-22, with the Tory mayor having a second, deciding vote if the result is a dead heat. The council spokesman said the trip was no joy ride; but agreed that National Power would not have used shareholders' money for the trip if it did not expect a favourable return.

HEARTLANDS

One in the *Eye* for BR...

FOLLOWING revelations in the *Eye*, British Rail has axed its daft plan to waste more than £50 million building a hi-tech railway station, Birmingham Heartlands, on an obscure plot of land four miles from the centre of England's third city.

BR had intended to all but close the popular New Street station and shunt operations four miles away to what would have been Britain's prototype 21st century station. The much cheaper and far more sensible option — reopening city centre Snow Hill station to inter-city trains — was never proposed.

As the *Eye* revealed in March, Heartlands' *raison d'etre* was to provide platforms long enough to accommodate 18-carriage Channel tunnel trains. When, only days after the massive Heartlands press launch, Chunnel planners announced that the Euro-trains would only take 14 carriages, there was no need for Heartlands.

Strangely it has taken BR six months to tell "customers" the news, even though Heartlands project director Colin Andrews was "replaced" last spring after his pet scheme had been aborted. In typical BR-speak, train bosses now claim Heartlands has been shunted aside for a few years to reconsider costs which mysteriously doubled to nearly £100 million over the summer.

Midlands commuters can soon expect an announcement regarding a new Euro station at Birmingham Snow Hill — as first proposed in the *Eye*.

In the City

DAVID MELLOR'S generous patron Elliott Bernerd and his property group Chelsfield would seem to defy gravity — rising ever upwards while all around sink lower in the sea of debt and devaluations, if not below the waves.

Despite buying Laing Properties with P&O for £495 million in 1990 at near the top of the market; despite being big in central London properties; despite borrowings nearer £200 million than £100 million — the Chelsfield ship has sailed onwards, powered by Tim Bell hype and Bernerd's media allies. Witness the descriptions of teaboy-to-tycoon Bernerd when it emerged that he had selflessly provided a Mercedes and Mayfair flat for "Freddie Freeloader".

But just how much does the hype equal the reality? Let's start with that much-vaunted placing of Chelsfield shares last March which was described as the precursor to a stock market listing that was to happen by "early summer", according to the *Sunday Times*, "within four to six months", according to the *Financial Times*. It is now nearly autumn and six months on — but still no listing.

Barclays de Zoete Wedd, Nomura and Hong Kong's Bank of East Asia offered up to 115.4 million Chelsfield shares at 70p each thereby raising just over £80 million. They had already found pre-placing buyers for 92 million shares worth £65 million, including £30 million from the three houses and their clients, plus £10 million each from Bernerd's family trusts and P&O.

What happened is that no other buyers were found. That, needless to say, was not broadcast to the City. This embarrassing result was hardly a surprise given the hurricane sweeping all before it in the property world. But then the placing itself would not have happened had it not been dictated by the reorganisation of the increasingly sick-looking Laing deal. P&O, facing its own problems, wanted to carve up the Laing property portfolio and offload the £340 million debt burden it brought.

Chelsfield shareholders — they include British Land, M&G and Hambros — were promised a listing, and so the chance to get out, "as soon as practicable". Meanwhile a facility to match sellers with buyers was offered. It would seem that some have already availed themselves of this option. Several transfers have been registered, including for Nomura (98,000). Whether any sales have been above or below 70p would be interesting to know.

One Chelsfield seller at the time of the placing and since has been Bernerd's longtime right-hand man, George Devlin, a former private investigator. Devlin decided in March to take "early retirement" and live abroad. A company connected with Devlin, who had options on Chelsfield shares, was able by the placing to sell up to one million shares. This company is probably Porchester Holdings International of Panama. It has since reduced its holding by 857,000 Chelsfield shares and last month held just 230,000. A clear vote of confidence!

As a result of the placing flop, Bernerd's interests were left with 52 percent of Chelsfield instead of the 45 percent intended. No doubt the extra shares were purchased without bank loans or personal guarantees. This stake is held by the Bermuda company Chelsfield International. Chelsfield has always been controlled from offshore (first it was Panama), although resident for UK tax purposes. At the time of the Laing bid Bernerd raised his interest in Chelsfield International from 50 percent to 80 percent. It was not revealed who sold or what was paid for this extra 30 percent. In the same way it has never been disclosed who are the beneficial owners of the remaining 20 percent of the Bermuda company, other than that they are offshore foundations.

Just how sick the Laing deal has become has recently been disclosed in the latest accounts for both Chelsfield and Pall Mall Properties, the vehicle it and P&O used to make the bid. For the year to December 1991, before the March divorce, Pall Mall produced a pre-tax loss of £48.6 million due to interest costs of £82 million and £14.6 million of write-downs and realignments of properties. More than £73 million was sliced off the £495 million cost valuation of Laing. And since December property values and rents have slumped even further.

Yet it is valuations at December 1991 which were used to value not just the UK properties Chelsfield bought from Pall Mall but also its own existing property portfolio. For the period to last December Chelsfield itself produced a loss of £33 million. Finance costs were £20 million against rents of just £1.25 million, annual rental income of £17 million is estimated for this year. Borrowings were approaching £120 million.

Ahead of the deal with P&O, Chelsfield had already made a £25 million provision against its £75 million loan investment in Pall Mall. The value of its 50 percent of the equity was cut from £56 million to £50 million when it sold to P&O. But even after the divorce it is still on the hook to P&O regarding half of any losses on a £200 million loan guarantee to Laing in the US and up to £100 million for environmental guarantees covering properties there. Pall Mall's total UK property operating profit last year was only £23 million. Now 40 percent of those properties have to help pay the interest on the £160 million borrowed to finance the divorce. And an income shortfall already existed within Chelsfield.

No doubt Bernerd, like many others, will be hoping Mellor's fellow figure of fun Norman Lamont will be slashing interest rates so that the numbers will make more sense.

The much-leaked suggestion was that Bernerd would reverse Chelsfield into an already quoted property shell, thus avoiding the risk of a second share sale flop. Mountleigh was one suggestion before it crashed. Another possibility was Cabra Estates, owners of the Chelsea and Fulham football grounds which could make ripe property pickings.

It is no doubt a coincidence that ex-Mountleigh dealmaker Paul Bloomfield, no stranger to Bernerd, introduced Ashraf Marwan to Cabra. Marwan later sold on his 26 percent Cabra stake to Chelsea chairman Ken Bates, while Bernerd emerged as a possible player, advising Bates on a deal with Cabra over development of the 12-acre Chelsea site. Doubtless David Mellor's sole satisfaction in introducing Bernerd as "Mr Fixit" and encouraging such a deal was in keeping Chelsea at Stamford Bridge.

Similarly there can be no question that "Midas" Bernerd ever wanted anything from their friendship. After all, he is a generous patron of the arts — Chelsfield sponsored two London Philharmonic concerts this year. That alone would no doubt result at a future date in its own reward. He has no need to cultivate friendships with friends of the prime minister.

But there are those who wonder about Mellor's wisdom in choosing a friend who in some City circles is not only remembered for his undoubted expertise in property deals.

Less than a year ago Bernerd was giving evidence over the £1.95 million payment made by Guinness to a Swiss company as part of the illegal share support operation during the Distillers bid. £17 million worth of shares were bought by Violet Seulberger-Simon, sister of Bernerd's long time associate Jack Dellal. Bernerd advised Seulberger-Simon and was very close to Roger Seelig who helped to mastermind the support operation. The £1.95 million cheque was delivered to Bernerd for onward transmission.

While Bernerd gave evidence against his friend Seelig, the former merchant banker was assisted in his defence by none other than George Devlin, who advised him informally at the trial. Seelig was acquitted when the trial was stopped earlier this year because of his mental health.

In the mid-seventies Regional Properties chairman Neville Conrad claimed damages of £10 million against Bernerd, his estate agency Michael Laurie and others over a 1973 Kensington property deal which went wrong. Conrad claimed damages due to "fraud and/or conspiracy to defraud". One of the other defendants was Kensington planning official Charles Hudson, later charged with corruption.

But as Bernerd has never been party to any impropriety or wrong doing and is clearly the most successful and secure property man in London, there is absolutely no reason why "Freddie Freeloader" Mellor should not accept his hospitality and friendship.

'Slicker'

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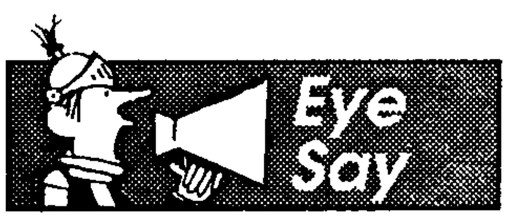
Send your advertisements to reach us by 29th September for inclusion in the next issue.

FOR DISPLAY ADVERTISING: 071 437 4017

Quote of the week:

"25p E.R.M. (Extra Reading Matter)"
The Sun, 17 September



TERRY RYAN: 25 Sept 91 to 25 June 92, several calls for salesrep Terry Ryan were received in Messaging for Cellphone 534973 owned by Mike Enn, London teacher. To whomsoever it might concern, Mike Enn and acquaintances have no knowledge of anyone called Terry Ryan and object to paying for messages for him.

SPEECHWRITING — see EYE HELP.

FUZZBALL, happy birthday. Love MOSTY TOASTY.

I TOLD YOU I would be a millionaire before I was 30 — thanks HELEN.

RUBY!! I think I can. Can you? HUW.

BIG MARROW. Happy birthday. Love LITTLE PUMPKIN.

BEDLAM 4in puzzle cube (not for the suicidal). Award-winning. Aaaargh! Solve by Christmas — give it away! £7.99. Ch/PO: 'ASTUTE MARKETING ONLY', PO Box 100, Yelverton, Devon (0822 841222).

CHAMPAGNE GIFT BOXES and hampers. Delivered nationwide from £29.50. 0602 603485, WICKER & BOX.

THIS XMAS give someone an original newspaper, dated the very day they were born. £15.95/two for £25. 0492 531303. (9am-9pm seven days.)

ALAN'S CARICATURED portraits. 0202 433716 for samples and prices.

IMMEDIATE Legal University Degrees in most subjects. BA, MA, Doctorate. Brochure 0742 562679.

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CARICATURES from photographs. £10.00. 0548 810468.

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"FAKE" ID CARDS are now available. SAE for catalogue. BELVINE (DEPT EYE), PO Box 320, Wembley, Middx. HA0 2UH.

FREE — WILDFLOWER seed/bulb catalogue. WILDSEEDS, Llandderfel, Gwynedd, LL23 7RF.

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A "TITLE" FOR a tenner? Details to SA-SURVIVAL (P), Gayfield, Arbroath, Scotland, DD1 1QJ.

FLYING DUCKS, cops and robbers, etc, etc. Send for wall-plaque catalogue! SAE to: INTO DESIGN, 28 Eastern Place, Brighton. (0273-606240). Access/Visa.

BIRTHDATE/ANNIVERSARY newspapers — FREEPHONE 0800-906609.

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SECRETS REVEALED: How to legally obtain a second foreign passport. Up-to-date guide by international attorney, over 100 countries examined. Also, become a PT (perpetual traveller) and legally avoid taxes, governments and hassle. Discover the insider facts about Andorra/ Gibraltar/ Monaco/ Campione/ Switzerland. New cars! How to buy for half price. Become a LEGAL tax exile. Send for free brochure to: SCOPE, Box 1860, 62 Murray Road, Waterlooville PO8 9JL, UK. Tel: 44 705 592255 (0705 UK) or Fax: 44 705 591975 (0705 UK). Advice that your accountants or lawyers wouldn't dare tell you — even if they knew. Please quote Box No when enquiring.

MOTOR INSURANCE instalments available. Phone TANGENT SW 0803 845745. Fax 846139.

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213 TO PRESENT, Flexidiscs. 0272 511455.

47 PRE-1980. 180 post-1984. 0494 674080.

EYES March 1979 to date. Offers: 0794 23167.

EYES 21-60 (1962-64), 238-800 (1971-92). Fifty missing. Geographical magazines (1960-82). National Geographics — 115 issues 1930s-80s. Offers? 081-997 2572.

TREATING CHEMICALS? Importer Bavarian beers, no chemicals, preservatives, additives etc. Mixed case 20 x 500ml, £35. Delivered England/ Wales. ACCESS/VISA. Call 0244 320013.

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YES, IT'S BACK! The property bargain of the decade. Now only £215,000. Large detached 6-bedroom house in Streatham, close to BR & High Road, drive in and out, 120ft garden at rear. V. good nick. Worth viewing. Ring TONY RUSHTON on either 071-437 4017 or 081-769 7339.

PROFESSIONAL GENTLEMAN will look after property in return for accommodation. London area. References available. 081-878 2278.

NON-SMOKING professional sought to share large luxurious SW16 house with female professional. All mod cons. £300 pcm. 081-764 1197.

FORGET EXPENSIVE hotels or B&Bs. Lovely house (1 double, 1 single bedroom) available to let in mystical Glastonbury's town centre. Centrally-heated, fully furnished with all necessary utensils, crockery etc and unique views over Abbey grounds. Telephone: 0234 211606 (answerphone) for leaflet.

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GLASGOW CENTRE. Private, fully serviced apartments in fine restored Robert Adam townhouse, day/weekend.week. Phone/fax for brochure: 041-553 1941.

AMERICAN CARS direct. Any American car, including jeeps, available direct from the USA. Will ship anywhere. Fax USA 404 2718931 or call 404 2718747. (Agents also wanted.)

OLD VOLKS HOME requires inmates. We buy — sell — restore — VW Beets, BROOKS OLD VOLKS HOME, Oakley Works, Chinnor, Oxon. 0844-53535.

GIVE US A TOE-JOB! Re-live Fergie's fairytale romance with Commemorative Royal t-shirts. 100% cotton. SML. £6.95 inc p&p. Cheque/PO to D. JONES, 39 Elgin Road, Seven Kings, Essex IG3

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OLD PERSIAN RUGS. Marquee sale (NOT auction) of hundreds of old Oriental rugs, carpets, runners, cushions, on Kent country house lawns over weekend 3rd & 4th October. Mostly £80-£2,800. Details, card from DESMOND NORTH, The Orchard, East Peckham, Kent. Tel: 0622 871353.

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GREENSLADE SOLAR heating. All you need is daylight! Cuts domestic hot water costs. Endorsed by British Fuels Group. No structural alterations. Fully guaranteed. It doesn't cost the earth to save the environment. For literature contact: GREENSLADE SOLAR, Dept PE, 146 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, SP2 7QR. Tel: (0722) 421000.

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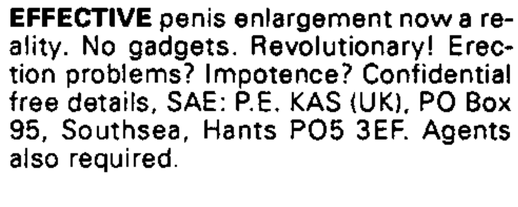

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GIVE UP the day job and live a life of leisure with prove horse-racing betting strategy that can net minimum £100 per day. Money back guarantee. Just £20.00 for secret. SYSTEMS UK, PO Box 581, Bromham, Bedford, MK43 8YZ.

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WELL-PRESENTED and enthusiastic young man looking for openings in challenging career, Cambridge area. Box 8603.

RECENTLY REDUNDANT exec, forty, will do anything to keep home and family together. Evenings, weekends preferred. Offers Box 0203.

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JAPANESE-SPEAKING female Caucasian, 27, needs job. 081-299 1924.

EASTERN APPROACHES: graduate, 31, open-minded, versatile, needs £2,500 for expedition to ex-Soviet Central Asia. Any task undertaken. Urgent. Rakhmat. Box 0303.

MURDER, MYSTERY, PARTY. Hampstead, October 24th. 081-959 6579.

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FEMALE ACCOUNTANT with small practice/book-keeping service, North London, is looking for male counterpart with a view to pooling resources. Box 8503.

BARRISTER OR LAWYER required with knowledge of Wireless Telegraphy Act. Midlands. Box 0202.

GROWN-UP VIDEOS purchased. SAE Box 0298.

SHORT STORIES, poetry needed for new magazine. MIKE, 92 Dickenson Road, Rusholme, Manchester 14.

AIR MILES wanted. £25/1000. 071-224 0288 (evenings).

CANTICUM NOVUM, one of London's leading chamber choirs, seeks two tenors and a low alto. Exciting programmes directed by HILARY DAVAM WEETON.

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Eye Love Advertiser

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GOVERNMENT AUCTION News. 071-734 8291/4.

NATURISM IN BRITAIN. Comprehensive Handbook £3. PRISCILLA JONES, Naturist Headquarters, Orpington, Kent.

THE RIPPER'S body fluids on bites grouped him "B" blood. Peter Sutcliffe is "O" blood group. That's why he was eliminated 9 times. For the amazing 144-page exposé "The Real Yorkshire Ripper Revealed", send £5 to O'GARA PUBLICATIONS, Ballinahowen, Athlone, Ireland.

Eye Need

MY OWN FAULT — gambling debts. £4,000. Can you help? Box 0703.

£10,000 urgently needed, partly but not entirely due to own stupidity. Box 0803.

POOR MEDICAL student. No grant. Needs financial aid. Help! Please. Ring (0628) 76084.

WORKING NIGHTS and days! Exhausted desperate female graduate needs £5,000 for debts and scientific research in Chile. Please help. Box 0903.

YOUNG MAN — cash crisis. £1000 would solve problem. Willing to work. Box 1003.

BEAUTIFUL LADY
seeks affluent gent
for romance.
Box 1103

MOTHER desperately seeking money. Any help gratefully received. Box 1203.

MODERN-DAY EXPLORER needs donations to fund trip through Central America. Will return favours by writing from countries visited. Box 1303.

DESPERATE single mother of three, exhausted from skidding on financial beam end, needs help. Box 1403.

HELP NEEDED to assist exceptionally bright five-year-old with school fees. Any offers gratefully accepted. Box 1503.

GIVE ME GOBS of money. Need it desperately. 4½K. Box 1603.

MASTERS DEGREE student requires £7000 to complete vocational course. Donations, loans, work accepted. Box 1703.

BROKE, BORED law student needs £10,000 for Ducati. Will insure life, will repay cash or kind if I qualify. Box 1803.

DESPERATELY NEEDED. Economical reliable car. Genuine home awaits generous gift. Box 1903.

NEW PUBLISHING venture needs cash to grow. Will repay. Box 2003.

£4000 desperately needed. Help! Box 2103.

ADVENTURER needs £3000 to join expedition to Siberia. Eternal gratitude. Box 2203.

FILM OPERA (for broadcast) needs small financial injection for completion. Any proposal/contribution welcome. 071-354 3959.

MARINE BIOLOGIST needs £2,000 to continue studies. Please help. Box 8903.

Eye Learn

LANGUAGE COURSES for professionals in London, Paris, Frankfurt, Berlin, Madrid, Salamanca. Ring LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL on 071-499 9621.

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UNIVERSITY DEGREES — BA/MA/Doctorate all available for life/work experience. No formal examinations required. Over 500 graduates now in the UK! Degrees open doors. Telephone 071-226 3858 or SAE TRINITY (UK), Suite 401, 302 Regent Street, London W1R 4AL ([Agy] Trinity College, Delaware, USA).

EFFECTIVE FRENCH coaching: Telephone (071) 935 8641.

ITALIAN DATELINE. Elderly but beautiful city still has room for new admirers. The British Institute of Florence has courses of Italian and Art History starting on 31 August, 28 September, 26 October and 23 November. Also one-year "A" levels from 28 September. Make a date with THE BRITISH INSTITUTE, Lungarno Guicciardini 9, 50125 Firenze (tel: 010 39 55 284031; fax: /289557).

LEARN TO PARAGLIDE on the beautiful Wiltshire Downs, just one hour from the M25. Let ParAvion take the weight off your feet. Phone 0380 860348 for a free colour brochure.

INTENSIVE "L"-DRIVING, Cumbria, 0228 515002.

READY FOR the Single Market? Or still stuck in the English-speaking recession? Learn languages! EF provides language training in the country where the language is spoken. French in France, German in Germany, etc — the proven way of learning most in the shortest time. (071) 401 3660.

CRASH COURSES! Learn to drive in a week. (0225) 420352.

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ORIGINAL and potentially highly lucrative magazine publishing concept needs backers (big, small) to launch. For information and full proposal contact Box 0603.

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FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE service, private or commercial. Telephone: 071-731 5792.

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Eye Contact

CASCADE, a very civilised fun group(s) for the UNATTACHED aged 30-50, dances, walks, theatre/dinner trips and so much more! in AVON, SOMERSET, S. WALES, DYFED. 0222 704653 or 0495 755309.NB: No 2CV or Reliant Robin owners!

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VEGGY & LONESOME? Ring 081-348 5229.

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WORLDWIDE PENFRIENDS. Details from J. CROSBIE, 23 Mansefield, Grantshouse, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3RN.

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SUCCESSFUL, hardworking, hedonistic couple, 40s, looking to expand their circle of friends with a view to enjoying social gatherings, outings, sharing laughter, conversation and companionship. Box 2303.

Eye Love

BEAUTIFUL KNIGHTSBRIDGE maiden, late 20s, slim, single, cultured, chic, caring, deep, artistic, musical, yet traditional, sparkling, fun; country, animal, children, Scottish loving, seeks soulmate (suitor) — handsome, charming, dashing, affectionate, romantic, unselfish, open-minded, cheerful, sense of humour, intelligent, dynamic, professional, single, chivalrous, "golden Knight", aristocratic/ upper middle-class, public-school chap of integrity, 27-42 years. Tall, medium-build, yummy! For keeps + mutual TLC! London/ anywhere! Photo and letter please. Box 6803.

IMAGINE: Vicomte de Valmont made safe; Cyrano de Bergerac without the nose; Prince with some dress sense. That's me. A sensual, romantic, intelligent, creative boy — (30s, 5ft 6in) — emotionally and financially independent. I imagine you are ugly like Kim Basinger, hard like Madame de Tourvel, and cynical like Roxanne: about 24, 5ft 4in, happy and single. I'm real — are you? Photographic proof required — a letter would be wonderful. Box 2903.

SPECIAL EFFECTS MAN needs partner to make the earth move! Fortysomething, intelligent, infantile... Slim, solvent and single bearded boffin seeks thirtysomething N/S female Earth creature, independent and attractive, for adventures and affection. Red hair nor absolutely essential, but healthy combination of humour and rudeness is. Recent photo/screentest appreciated! London/Brighton. Box 2603.

STUNNING AMERICAN ex-model, 31, seeks solvent mature man for evenings out and who knows? Box 2703.

MALE, 23, new PhD student, computer-friendly, seeks female friend. Oxford/ Cambridge/ London/ anywhere. Box 2803.

SPARKY, BLONDE and slim Eyelet (30yrs) in media business wishes to meet kind, affectionate, witty and bright professional male (30-47 yrs) for various cohersions. No part-time marrieds, thank you! If you think this is a tall order, then skip on to next ad! Box 4703.

TWO EARLY 30s entrepreneurs, wealthy but misguided, seek two totally wicked women, 25-35, for weekends of wild adventure and great laughter. Anywhere UK. Box 3403.

INTELLIGENT, attractive, affectionate 43-year-old woman seeks similar man, similar age. Do you like literature, philosophy, economics, music? Do you talk too much, but listen too? Then how about dinner? No discreet relationships, thank you! Photo appreciated. Box 3503.

PRUFROCK seeks Molly Bloom. Box 6603.

ANGLIAN MALE, 41, tall, slim, professional, seeks exciting discreet affair. Box 6703.

AUSTRALIA-BASED, good-looking English lawyer, early 40s, returns UK December, seels slim attractive Julia Roberts, 20/30, humorous, intelligent, caring, sporty, for correspondence, dinners, travel, affection, fun and romance. Photo Box 4503.

UNATTACHED MALE, 33, slim, fit, fun, seeks bright pretty female for loving relationship. Box 4603.

WELL-BUILT TOYBOY. willing to be stripped, washed and brought to your tent, Dorien. Photo, frank letter, please. Will travel. Box 3103.

SCOTLAND. Blonde intelligent, tall, romantic female seeks similar single sexy man 30-40. Expat/ Services/ Europe? Box 3203.

AFFLUENT professional Englishman (29), currently working in Holland, wishes to meet caring, intelligent, attractive female who knows how to enjoy life. Photo appreciated. Box 3303.

EMINENTLY attractive and financially independent lady; witty, slim, well-travelled, early 50s, 5ft 10in (widowed), seeks equally well-travelled and financially independent, amusing gentleman (50-60) to enjoy opera, cinema, food and travel. Please send photograph. Box 9503.

HAVE ALL decent men emigrated? Charming, crafty female sleuth, 30s, combs Morse's county for clues to unsolved mystery. Box 9603.

LONDON professional man (42) seeks sexy lady for steamy relationship, 081 444 8950 (home) 071 722 1560 (office).

GRADUATE FEMALE, 31, slightly anxious, sensitive left-wing, seeks N/S caring solvent man for closeness and parenting. London/Essex. Box 9703.

MAN, 36, 6ft, N/S, professional, practical, unattached, anatomically and emotionally intact, seeks vivacious good woman. I enjoy conversation, knowledge, laughter, radio, work, live music, pubs, restaurants, boats, newspapers, Scotland. I dislike ignorance, violence, aggression, injustice, discos, shellsuits and beetroot. M5 corridor/ anywhere. Box 9803.

PROFESSIONAL creative Jill on crest of life seeks Jack to motor downhill with. Box 3603.

ARE YOU pretty, passionate and underloved, living in South/Southwest? Athletic, intelligent male, 40, married, wishes to meet. Box 3703.

MARRIED MAN, 40, seeks sexy lady with sparkle. South/ Southwest. Good humour and physique available. Box 3803.

HAPPY, HEALTHY, humorous, slim divorcée, 40s, SE-based, seeks long-term cherishment with gentle man of integrity. Box 3903.

GRADUATE, professional, 41, 6ft, slim, married, Scottish. Enjoys conversation, racquet sports, pubs, literature. Seeks intelligent, slimmish, perhaps Callipygian, female for occasional, hopefully fulfilling, company. Manchester/ Cheshire/ Birmingham. Photo please. Box 4003.

MAN, 25, who is honest, intelligent, witty, solvent, successful, outgoing, charming, romantic, caring and has nice body, average looks, seeks Notts/ E. Mids lady for relationship/ romance. Box 4103.

FRAUGHT MALE, 39, Senior Partner in struggling management consultancy practice, half-separated from messy marriage, seeks similar female for mutual consolation, food, wine, potential romance, and minor adventures to relieve the pressures of life. Looks/ age not important, sense of humour essential. Integrity assured. Bristol/ W. Midlands area. Box 4203.

T, D & H, humorous, intelligent male, 20, seeks lady for simple, mutual fun and friendship. Age unimportant. C. London. Box 5503.

LOOSELY ATTACHED businessman (39) seeks attractive professional or business woman interested in arts, politics, for discreet relationship, dining and passion. Oxon. Box 5803.

MAN, 45, good looking, wealthy, athletic, virile, seeks attractive sexy woman, any nationality, married or single, for discreet or indiscreet sexual relationship. Photo ensures reply. London. Box 3003.

SUCCESSFUL MALE, 40, seeks kind, intelligent female friend. Box 3199.

FRIENDLY, CARING vegetarian, 45, married, alone London weekdays, seeks interesting, intelligent (brave?) woman. Box 2403.

SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL man, 46, looking for new lease of life, seeks lady 30-45 to enjoy dining out.discreet affair and possibly more. London area. Box 2503.

PEACEFUL Cumbrian woman, 32 years, wants man friend. Box 4403.

SLIM ATTRACTIVE businesswoman, sense of humour despite recent experience as emotional football, seeks strong caring male 35+ for mutually rewarding relationship. Interest in polo desirable but not essential. Definitely no Argentines. London/SE. Box 5003.

MALE, 29, professional, handsome, wants to share laughs, love and life's itchy bits with female (25-35) who's unattached, N/S, has personality and desires an exciting loyal relationship. Surrey/ London. Box 5103.

CITY BUSINESSMAN, 42, 6ft 2in, fit, solvent, seeks attractive uninhibited lady for discreet, mutually beneficial relationship. Possible afternoons of champagne and lust. Box 5203.

DIRECTOR, fiftyish, seeks lady 50/65 for stimulating exercise. Status unimportant. Discretion assured. Box 5303.

MIDDLEAGED MALE, professional, prudish wife, seeks mutually satisfying weekday "escapes" with non-smoking female. London/ SE. Box 5403.

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TALL ADVENTUROUS female graduate, late thirties, own car, house, child, would welcome male counterpart who enjoys family life. Travel and possible permanence, Oxford area. Box 6903.

LONDON-BASED MAN, athletic, lean, good-looking, affluent, semi-attached, seeks daytime evening fun with good-looking sexy woman, any age, any nationality. Picture essential, returned. Thanks. Box 7003.

TALL, DARK, handsome, built like Stallone — not me. That's why I've placed this ad. 40-year-old male, 5ft 7in, own home, etc, needs lady 25+ to share lifestyle going to waste. Kent/ Sussex. Box 7103.

TWO GIRL FRIENDS (attractive professionals, early 30s) seek like males for double dates. Nothing funny! Box 7203.

SHROPSHIRE DREAMER, 40, tall, solvent, professional, seeks woman with beauty, vision and commitment for new beginnings and uninhibited adventure lasting 40-50 years. No messing. Box 7303.

AQUARIAN MALE, Berkshire, with Beard and Balinese (cat), seeks non meat eating/ smoking bright, attractive lady, same age or younger, with own razor. Letter and photo please to Box 7403.

TASTY BUXOM wench (32) seeks tall professional knight. Box 7503.

GRADUATE hasn't seen Mrs Robinson for 37 years. Time to take tuition seriously with London-based lady. Photo appreciated and returned. Box 7603.

BUDDING Christopher Columbus sought for voyage of romantic discovery by tall, blonde, educated woman (23). London. Box 7703.

GENTLE GIANT, 36, seeks special lady to share life and love. Loves music, passion, children, tenderness. Photo welcomed, inner beauty essential. Box 7803.

WASTED WANTON — W. Country — creative, curvy, small dirty blonde, cool ext., warm int. (late (always) 30s) needs stimulus, humour, nurturing, from tall, attractive, sensuous, solvent, visually aware, honest (tactful!) man 30-50. Existing? No Bores/ Boys/ Thatcherites! (Photo. ALA.) Box 7903.

LONDON MAN, professional, presentable, single, 50, seeks warm lady with sense of humour to enjoy civilised relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 8003.

BRAINY FEMALE seeks male sputnik. Box 8103.

ATTRACTIVE professional female, late 30s, Guardian reader. Would like to meet like-minded solvent unattached male, with sense of humour. Box 8203.

SENSUOUS BRUNETTE, 29, slim, elegant, accomplished, seeks male high-flyer with big heart and passion for life (vector thrust an advantage). Box 5903.

SINGLE MAN (45) can't play tennis and golf all the time — looking for partner when too dark! Glos area. Box 6003.

TALL SLIM handsome professional man, fit forties, seeks beautiful discreet younger lady. Scotland/ London. Box 6103.

FEMALE GRADUATE, 30, slim, attractive, seeks intelligent caring man 30-40. Thames Valley area. Photo please. Box 6203.

ACADEMIC CHRISTIAN? Female? Tall? "Older"? Alone? RSVP (0304) 204093.

OXFORDSHIRE: warmhearted, successful, educated optimist, tall, slim, 32, seeks well-adjusted gentle woman, 20-32. Your reply treated confidentially and answered. Box 5603.

MALE ROMANTIC, 40, own business, happily married yet frustrated. Yearns for slim attractive woman, 25-40, similar situation, for occasional meetings to remember and free holiday in Crete. Absolute discretion assured and expected. My photo for yours. Box 5703.

DISCERNING stylish lady, upmarket, attractive and affectionate, 30s, seeks highly confident and kind man. Box 8303.

I'M MALE, 34, single, love cuddles. You're female, 22-34, single, love cuddles. Why haven't we met yet? Cambs/ anywhere. Box 4303.

SUBTLE MALE, 29, tall, fair, professional, seeks attractive, nymphomaniac cook for marriage, rumpypumpy and babies. Photo/ phone. SE. Box 9003.

MALE, 40, attractive, beautiful body, seeks similar female for company and relationship. Photo please. Box 9103.

TWO ATTRACTIVE girls seek repulsive men. Photo appreciated. Box 9203.

HAPPY AND FREE male, 45 but still youthful and attractive, seeks the tall, vivid, younger lady who also lives in the Channel Islands and who's got the key to Box 9303.

FUN FLING offered by outstandingly attractive, successful, creative, amusing, ultra-fit, caring man to exceptionally attractive, intelligent girl or woman who can meet my high standards. Will make you feel great. Box 9403.

"Demand last Christmas gave us nervous breakdowns:we had to stop advertising for two months!"
Otterswick Theatrical Props

SYLPHLIKE Southern siren sought by 50+ married man for discreet daytime dalliance. Phone/photo please. Box 9903.

EASYGOING GENT, 29, N/S, seeks similar petite lady. Financial advice possible. Toe sucking forbidden. South Derbyshire (excepting Edwina Curry). Box 6303.

SINGLE SCORPIO, 35, seeks non-smoking Sharon Stone — no ice-picks. Birmingham. Box 6403.

LADYLESS PROFESSIONAL single man, 25, living in Cumbria, seels unattached woman for fun and frolics. Box 6503.

BERKSHIRE MALE, 42, into music and massage, photography and psychology, erotica and all things bizarre, seeks lady to share interests, home and happiness. Box 4803.

Eye Soldier On

TWO DIRTY Rotten Scoundrels (aka army officers), currently with UN in Iraq, seek masses of mail from stunning, witty, materialistic women (21-28) with a view to hideously large cash-blowing exercise in London. Sultry photos a must. Box 10003.

SHIP'S OFFICER, 36, off course, seeks female with good anchor and true compass for voyage of discovery. Home port in Suffolk. Box 4903.

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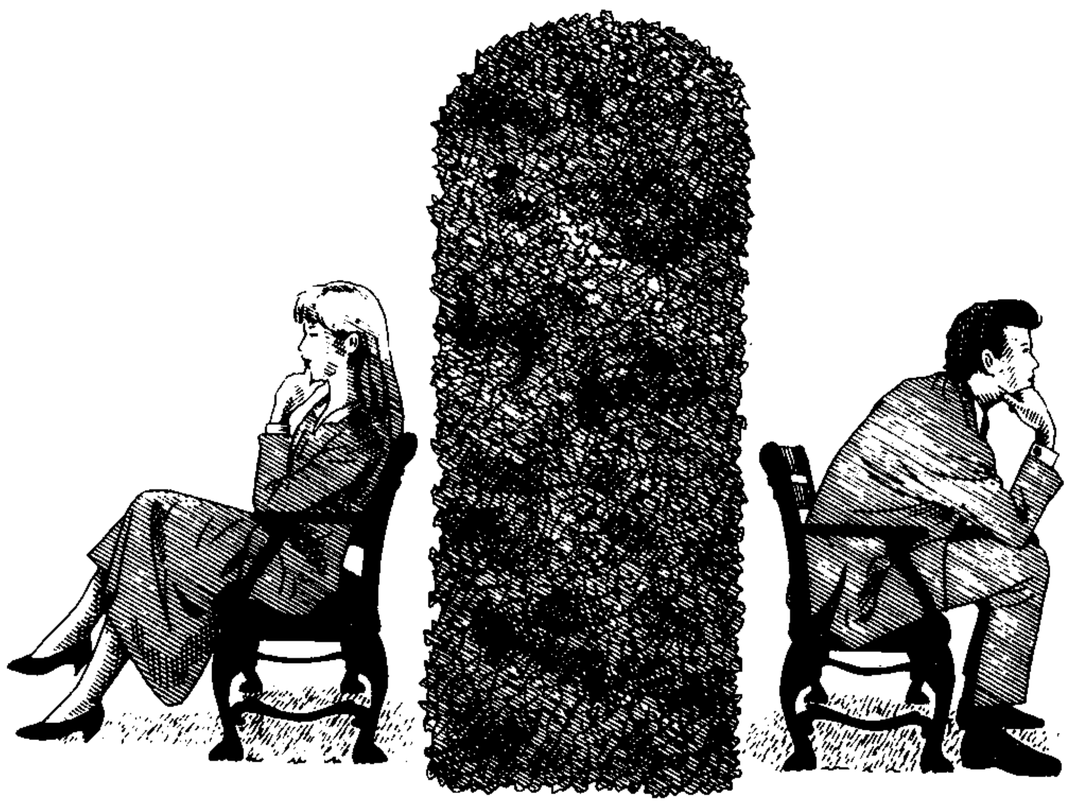

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Next you're asked to describe the kind of person you'd like to meet by answering the same set of questions.
You can even specify WHERE you'd like to meet them. (It's little use our finding you the right person in John O'Groats if you live at Land's End).
Then the questionnaire moves on to the really crucial part, where you answer questions about your interests, your personality and what you expect from your social life and personal relationships.
(Most people find the questionnaire both enjoyable and revealing).
Once the questionnaire is completed and returned to us, our computer goes to work, checking through the records of every single Dateline member, searching for the person who best matches the picture you've built up.
And it's important to remember that the computer may already be searching for YOU on someone else's behalf.

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Our computer can't, of course, make relationships: only you can do that.
All the computer does is make the introductions and we find it usually selects six compatible people in each run.
Their names are given to you, all you have to do is arrange to meet. Naturally, there's no guarantee any introduction will be a success, but consider this: for once, you'll be meeting someone who POSITIVELY WANTS TO MEET YOU – and that's a good start to any relationship.
Dateline, we must stress, is not for people who think it might be a bit of a lark, but for caring people who are looking for something more. Perhaps that describes you?
If it does, fill in the coupon and we'll send you our questionnaire, together with a free copy of our paperback "All you need is love" – a book full of genuine stories of how Dateline members meet their ideal partner. Naturally, your enquiry will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

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